

# RELIGION IN LIFE

A CHRISTIAN QUARTERLY of opinion and discussion

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VOL. XXV

Spring, 1956

NO. 2

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## Listening to the Voice

CARLO LUPO

YOU always expect that tomorrow and its various circumstances of life will bring you that good which today you lack. But for decades you have waited, and still this tomorrow and these happy conditions have not come.

What are you waiting for, to convince you that nothing truly is except today, and that your happiness depends neither on time nor place, but upon the inner condition of your soul?

What are you waiting for, that may incline you to obey and to love the life here and now? What are you waiting for, before saying to the passing moment: stay, that I may contemplate you? What are you waiting for, to free you from the false conception of life which makes beauty seem to dwell in what you possess, when beauty is in what you honor? Have you not yet understood that life is lost when one possesses it, and it is possessed instead when one loses it?

The fundamental problem of light and peace in your soul, do not put off till tomorrow. Tomorrow is the realm of illusions, the locus of your laziness and your unworthiness.

In the life of the spirit, in the true life, it is always *today*.

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Faith in Christ does not remove pain, but interprets it.

Be true man. Do not escape into dreams, live your humanity down to its depths, and you will meet the true man, Jesus Christ.

As long as you are a creature of dalliance, you cannot understand Christ, the man of truth: nude, crude, suffering.

The severe truth forges the new life.

—Translated by permission from *La Luce*, Waldensian church periodical, Torre Pellice, Italy, December 23, 1955.

## Spiritual Healing

JOHN PITTS

TWENTY YEARS AGO, such a book as G. G. Dawson's *Healing: Pagan and Christian* was a challenging pioneer work. Today, interest in extramedical methods of healing men's minds and bodies is widespread and deep-seated, and the phenomena of Faith Healing can no longer be dismissed with a shrug of the shoulders, a snap judgment, and a clever phrase, either by the church or by the medical profession. In fact, the miracle of faith healing (if miracle it be) is nowadays publicized by the miracle of television. Every week a faith-healing program is being presented by nearly a hundred TV channels in the United States and Canada, the central figure of which is an evangelist named Oral Roberts, whose headquarters are located in Tulsa, Oklahoma, but who also conducts healing missions in other parts of the country.

The Reverend Oral Roberts is a minister of the Church known as the Assemblies of God. He is a man of vibrant and dominating personality, a fluent speaker with a flair for the dramatic, and a shrewd master of assemblies. It is probable that he has never studied academic psychology; but that he has a remarkable grasp of practical psychology, in the field of religious propaganda, is obvious to all who watch him in action. It is clear that he has an immense following; and as a result of these telecasts his influence, for good or ill, will greatly increase and his following become much bigger. He must have been engaged in this faith-healing work for a considerable time, long enough for him to have built up a large and effective organization and to have collected the huge sum necessary in order to buy one-half hour a week on one of the major TV networks. It is quite possible that in this respect, and indeed in several others, he will eventually outdo Billy Graham and his "Hour of Decision," and Pastor Charles E. Fuller and his "Revival Hour."

Oral Roberts has a huge tent seating about ten thousand people, and it would seem that the place is filled at every meeting with earnest souls, most of them, and curious folks, many of them, to hear the evangelist's

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passionate preaching and to witness his spectacular healings. The whole service is an amazing sight, the equal of any of the TV "spectaculars" presented by "Producer's Showcase" and "The Best of Broadway." (The announcer on our local TV channel made an awkward slip one Sunday afternoon. He said, "Tune in next week, same time, same channel, for the Oral Roberts show.")

The evangelist's congregation consists of all sorts and conditions of men and women, from little children right up to those whose life journey is nearly over. It seems to be a cross section of American life, young and old, poor and well-to-do, illiterate and well educated, the socially obscure and the socially prominent, the healthy and the sick—especially the sick. In a way, it is really a pathetic congregation. It is pretty certain that most of the people are seeking something vital for their lives, though many of them might be hard put to say exactly what it is they are after. At its lowest it is a craving for some emotional uplift that could bring a little color into their otherwise drab lives. At its highest, it is the search for God, for that which alone can give meaning to their seemingly meaningless existence. Most of all, there are hundreds of sick people who are yearning for physical wholeness. Perhaps they have gone to doctor after doctor, to hospital after hospital, to nostrum after nostrum, but are none the better for all their striving and for all the money they have spent. Many of them perhaps have been given up by the medical profession. Now they are looking for a miracle—God's supernatural intervention through his human instrument, Oral Roberts.

The evangelist is a fundamentalist, indeed an ultrafundamentalist, although—unlike some prominent fundamentalists—he does not attack those who are more liberal in their religious opinions and attitudes. Oral Roberts' theology is somewhat crude, and is unacceptable to many of us. Some of the statements I have heard him make strike me as arrant nonsense and would not survive any intelligent examination. On the other hand, some of his utterances have the authentic ring of genuine religion, and must be heart-warming to all true believers. Obviously the evangelist is a man of immense power—it may be the truly spiritual power of a genuine charismatic ministry, or perhaps only the magical power so often exercised by the primitive medicine-man—and is able to get his message across to most of the people who crowd to his healing services.

No doubt that would be true of his preaching, quite apart from the faith-healing aspects of his campaign. But Oral Roberts' influence with

the multitude is certainly increased by the spectacular cures which he seems to achieve in the white light of publicity. It is clear that there is no hokey-pokey about what he does in his tent meetings. Of course, those of us who watch the proceedings on television see only the successes, for the film (and it is well to remember that the program is on film—it is not "live") is carefully and cleverly edited beforehand. We do not see the failures, and there must be many of them. Nor do we learn what happens afterward to those who are claimed as cured. If there are any lapses, we are not told about them. It would be interesting to know if there is any follow-up program to make sure if the cures really are cures. And if some cures are demonstrated to be permanent, it would be of service to know: (1) what is the proportion of these permanent cures to those which are only temporary; (2) what is the proportion of the cures which take place in the meeting to the failures which are not disclosed on TV; and (3) how many of the alleged cures are genuine cases of spiritual healing or only (and this is not to decry them) examples of mental or psychological healing, i.e., healing by hypnotic suggestion.

There are bound to be many failures. Oral Roberts himself admits this (he could not really do otherwise); at every meeting he is careful to point out that not every one who comes forward to have the evangelist's healing hands laid on him or her is cured. But "hope springs eternal in the human breast," and Oral Roberts is a shrewd enough psychologist to maintain that his prayers go with these failures and that ultimately God, in his own good time, will heal all those who have true faith.

Are the cures which seem to take place really cures? Would they stand up before an impartial scientific inquiry? Or, to put it more generally, is faith healing a fact or a fiction? We know that physical healing is a fact, despite the many failures to be chalked up by the medical profession. We know, too, that psychological healing is a fact, although again, psychiatrists and psychotherapists have to admit that they do not always succeed. But what about faith healing, or what should be more properly called Divine healing through faith—is that also a fact in some instances, despite the failure in others?

## I

There seems to be more than enough evidence to affirm that spiritual healing is a fact. Perhaps it does not take place as often as some easily persuaded people believe; on the other hand, it may happen more frequently than the more skeptical folk among us are prepared to admit. There are

too many instances on record—cases which are clear cut and about which there can be not the shadow of doubt—for us to be able reasonably to deny the fact of spiritual healing. Anyone familiar with the literature on this subject will know how true the statement is.

Dr. Alexis Carrel, the famous medical scientist who wrote the best-seller, *Man the Unknown*, was convinced upon the basis of his own personal experience that miracles of healing are possible. He won the Nordhoff-Jung medal for cancer research, so he ought to know a cancer when he sees one. He testifies that he once saw a cancerous sore shrivel up into a scar before his very eyes, after earnest prayer. That, and other experiences, convinced him that prayer is “the most powerful form of energy that one can generate.”

In the spring of 1937, Dr. Leslie D. Weatherhead, in an address to the British Methodist Conference, cited three cases of spiritual healing through prayer:

1. An airman, suffering in a hospital from an incurable disease, went back to work after prayers had been offered for him.

2. A woman, paralyzed in both legs, was able to walk again within two or three hours of being prayed for.

3. A blind woman, at 7:30 one Sunday night, found her sight restored. At that hour 2,500 people were praying for her at the City Temple.

As is well known, Dr. Weatherhead has, over a quarter of a century, developed the concept of Divine healing both theoretically and practically. In his most recent book, *Psychology, Religion, and Healing*, he covers the whole subject from every angle.<sup>1</sup> He relates several cases of spiritual healing, the most striking being that of a four-year-old boy, suffering from nephritis. The boy's mother, a nurse, had been a member of Dr. Weatherhead's congregation. After her marriage she went to live in North Wales, and it was there that her little son was taken seriously ill. The decided opinion of all the doctors, including some of the best specialists, was that the boy was bound to die. The distracted mother wrote to her former minister, beseeching his help.

Dr. Weatherhead brought the matter before his congregation, asking the people to join with him in praying for the little lad's healing. To the amazement of all the doctors, the boy made a complete recovery. “It is a miracle” was the general testimony, while the family doctor wrote to the

<sup>1</sup> This book contains the substance of his Yale Lectures on Preaching, and also material presented for the Ph.D. of the University of London. Some of this also appears in Dr. Weatherhead's article, “Christian Faith and Psychotherapy” in RELIGION IN LIFE, Autumn 1952.

mother, "You may tell Dr. Weatherhead that personally I am *quite sure* prayer played the biggest part in your son's cure." Dr. Weatherhead adds a comment for those who might object that the little boy would have recovered even if no prayers had been offered on his behalf. Had the boy regained health subsequent to his having taken some drug, no one would say that he would have recovered in any case; the cure would be ascribed to the drug, and the drug would soon be in universal use! The implication is obvious.

The name of Dr. Howard Somervell is well known to many. He is a fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons, London. He was a member of the Mount Everest Expedition which, in 1922, climbed nearly to the top of the highest mountain in the world. In his book, *After Everest*, Dr. Somervell tells of an Indian schoolmaster with tubercular disease which had reached the well-nigh incurable stage. It was decided on high medical authority that the only way to save the man's life was by amputating his leg. When the man was told of the doctor's decision, he said, "Will you give me three weeks? I want to see what effect constant praying will have." The doctors reluctantly gave their consent, and the man was discharged from the hospital. He went home. Three weeks later he was back at the hospital, showing marked signs of improvement. A chain of prayer was kept up by his family and friends. The man's improvement continued. In a few months he was completely healed, back at school, teaching his classes, playing games with the boys, running about on both legs without the slightest indication of disease or disability.<sup>2</sup>

Dr. Sherwood Eddy is a highly respected figure in the religious world. He is a level-headed man, with a sound educational background and a wide experience in many countries. In his book, *You Will Survive After Death*,<sup>3</sup> he reports from first-hand knowledge a number of cases of spiritual healing, some of them the most remarkable on record. Here is one of them. There lived in London a man named W. T. Parrish. His wife was dying of cancer, and had undergone one almost fatal operation. She had reached the stage where she was beyond the help of medical science. She urged her distracted husband that they try spiritual healing. At first, he was much opposed to the idea. He himself was a man of fine physique, an instructor in fencing, boxing, and physical culture generally; and he was not averse to saying that spiritual healing and the like was only for weak-minded women

<sup>2</sup> This case is quoted by Dr. Weatherhead, *op. cit.*, and also another in which Dr. Somervell witnessed a miraculous healing, through prayer, of cancer of the cheek.

<sup>3</sup> Rinehart & Co., 1950.

and for men who refused to think. But, driven by the desperate necessity of his wife's seemingly hopeless condition, he began to feel that there might be something in what she said. He commenced to pray for her recovery, and increasingly came to believe that he would be used of God in the healing of his wife. After nine months of intense praying, Mrs. Parrish was completely cured, and no further operations were necessary.

One other instance must suffice. Rev. Dr. John Heuss, the Rector of Trinity Church (Episcopal), New York City, in a recent volume of sermons entitled *Our Christian Vocation*,<sup>4</sup> relates two striking examples of spiritual healing. He recounts them in a sermon, "Does Prayer Change Anything?" Here is the more remarkable of the two cases. One of his parishioners, an elderly woman, broke her leg three times in rapid succession. She was confined to bed for a number of years. Much additional tragedy came her way, and she lost all power to pray and all belief in the efficacy of prayer. One day Dr. Heuss talked to her about healing miracles, including those associated with Lourdes. She said that she wished she could exercise enough faith to be cured, but feared that she was beyond it.

A little later Dr. Heuss called on the woman again, and to his surprise found her out of bed and walking around. This is what she told him. After his previous visit she decided to throw the whole burden of her affliction upon God in earnest, believing prayer, and to ask him to cure her. She prayed and prayed and prayed, until exhausted she fell asleep. In the midst of her sleep she heard a voice say, "Arise, you are able to walk." She got up there and then, completely healed. And Dr. Heuss adds, "Since that day I have never doubted that God can and does perform miracles of healing." Dr. Heuss's conviction is being reached by an increasing number of men and women today, in every religious denomination.

## II

Spiritual healing, then, seems to be a fact. But we must go a step further and affirm that it is not merely a Christian fact. In other words, faith healing is not confined to Christianity. Fundamentalists would probably deny this. For them all genuine healing through faith is in "the Name of Jesus," and they would refuse to accept as true any alleged cures in which the all-prevailing Name of Christ was not invoked.

But facts are facts and cannot be honestly gainsaid. Faith healing is as old as mankind, and has usually been brought about in close association

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<sup>4</sup> Seabury Press, 1955.

with religion. In primitive religion we have the witch-doctor, or medicine-man, who combined in his person the priest and the physician. His methods were crude, unscientific, magical, but that he had his victories over physical and mental disability cannot be denied. No doubt the operating factor was the "faith" of the patient induced by the personal magnetism of the witch-doctor working in a cultural context favorable to the creation of such "faith."

In the national religions of antiquity—and especially throughout the Greco-Roman world—this tradition was continued, the priest and the physician often being one and the same person. Throughout the ancient civilized world were many healing shrines, wherein the power of the god was invoked in order to effect the cure of disease. Frequently this was done in religious ceremonies. Often, too, the patient would sleep within the precincts of the sacred place; sometimes he would dream that he was treated, even surgically, by the god and his assistant priest-physicians. And that cures really were effected is borne witness to by surviving records—literature and votive tablets. Obviously powerful suggestion was at work, which sometimes made possible successful surgical treatment under hypnosis.

It would seem that three general healing techniques were utilized, and in all three the "faith" of the patient was an important factor. The first was purely spiritual and made great use of prayer and sacrifice, though the edge was taken off the spiritual aspect because of the prevalence of magical notions. The second method was mental; it set great store on charms and amulets, incantations and spells (here again the magical is at work), which things set in operation the same healing mechanisms that are induced by the modern psychiatrist and psychoanalyst. The third method was physical, of which modern medicine is the lineal descendant: drugs and herbal remedies were used to bring healing to the body, and perhaps also to the mind.

It is only in recent years that the terms "psychosomatic illness" and "psychosomatic medicine" have become generally familiar, but it is clear that the close connection between body and mind (or soul) was recognized by the ancients, though they could not put their ideas on this point into words, and certainly could not philosophize on the subject. The witch-doctors of Asia and Africa, and the priest-physicians of Greece and Rome, did not make the distinction between the spiritual, the mental, and the physical as we do today, though they practiced the three techniques of healing. Without knowing the philosophy or the psychology of the matter,

they treated human personality as a whole, recognizing the unity of body and mind. They were psychosomaticists without realizing it, and long before the rise of psychosomatic medicine.

And they had their cures. In other words, no matter what their religion, miracles of healing took place. Some (and only some) men and women were cured of their afflictions through contact with what they believed to be supernatural powers. Perhaps their blind faith was more than justified. After all, we Christians believe that God is not circumscribed in his will for good in the lives of the people he has created. "God fulfills himself in many ways," and it is not unbelievable that he sometimes fulfilled himself in the crude spiritual, mental, and physical healings of bygone generations.

### III

A third fact follows from this: Spiritual healing is quite independent of the theological beliefs or philosophical outlook of either the faith-healer or the faith-healed. We may assume, for the sake of argument, that the cures we see depicted on the TV program really are cures. But this gives us no warrant to assume further that, therefore, what Oral Roberts says in his sermons is all gospel. He thinks it is, of course; otherwise, being an honest man, he would not proclaim it. Furthermore, he maintains that the cures that are effected validate the doctrines that he preaches.

The argument, however, overshoots the mark; it proves too much. Joseph Smith, the Mormon leader, was a successful faith healer. Does that prove that the Mormon perversion of the gospel is the true version of the Christian faith? Christian Science practitioners often achieve spectacular results, and can chalk up an imposing list of faith cures.<sup>5</sup> Does this undeniable fact demonstrate the soundness of Mary Baker Eddy's metaphysical doctrines? Amazing healing miracles are reported from Lourdes, in France, from Brother André's Shrine in Montreal, and from St. Anne de Beaupré near Quebec City. Does this mean that the cult of the Blessed Virgin, and of the Saints, is genuine Christianity?

It is not necessary to argue that any one of these systems of thought is either true or false. That is not the point. Rather, the point is that they cannot all be true. Not one of them need be true, and all can be false. But if one is true, then all the others must logically be rejected, for they contradict each other on most important points of doctrine. Fundamentalism may

<sup>5</sup> The testimony of a man of the caliber of Edwin D. Canham, editor of *The Christian Science Monitor*, based on his own personal and family experience, cannot be lightly dismissed.

be the pure and unadulterated gospel, but Oral Roberts' cures are no proof of this. Mormonism may be genuine Christianity, but Joseph Smith's successes as a faith-healer are no guarantee that this is so. Mrs. Eddy's metaphysical teachings may be sound, however silly they look to those who reject them, but you cannot logically justify them by referring to Christian Science cures. And the Roman Catholic cultus may be completely valid, but the spectacular healing miracles of Lourdes and other shrines are no proof of this. Faith cures are common to them all, and no doubt there is a common factor at the root of them all, but the doctrines proclaimed are contradictory and therefore cannot all be true.

#### IV

In the fourth place, it may be noted that what the Apostolic Church claimed as one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, viz. the gift of healing, does seem to be possessed by some contemporary Christians. It is not confined to any sacred caste; it is not the exclusive possession of men ordained in the supposedly proper manner. Members of the clergy and of the laity appear to have this gift, and it overleaps denominational boundaries. Dr. Cyril C. Richardson speaks of these people as exercising what he calls a charismatic ministry,<sup>6</sup> and it would seem that as a patient he himself has benefited from this type of ministry. Very often the people who possess this gift of healing, and who are thus able to exercise this charismatic ministry to the sick, are very simple in faith and in understanding. They may have little in the way of educational background, and may even be afflicted with much intellectual and theological confusion (though they may not be conscious of it as an affliction). But they have something deeper than the gifts of intellect. They have spiritual intuition, and the power to make come true today the words that we sometimes sing about the Healing Christ:

Thy touch has still its ancient power;  
No word from thee can fruitless fall.

There seems to rest upon them a "double portion" of Christ's spirit. Thus are they able to perform those "greater works" which, according to the Fourth Gospel, the Master promised his disciples they would be able to do. Of these rare souls Dr. Richardson says: "Their lives are so fully consecrated to the healing Christ that he radiates through them. By their prayer

<sup>6</sup> See article, "Church Unity and the Ministry to the Sick" in *RELIGION IN LIFE*, Winter 1951-52. Dr. Richardson also speaks of the sacramental ministry, of pastoral counseling, and of a type "typically Protestant" which combines the charismatic, the sacramental, and the counseling types. The whole article is worth rereading.

and conversation one is made forcibly aware that these people are living in a spiritual world of which the average believer knows but little, and are able to tap resources which lie beyond most of us.”<sup>7</sup>

## V

But there is a very disturbing fact which must be mentioned, since we cannot escape it, although its theological and psychological implications are as yet far from clear. That is, there are many failures. Not every believing soul is cured, however strong the faith, however earnest and persistent the prayers. Indeed, it may be that the failures greatly outnumber the successes. There is always a danger here—the danger that these people will lose their faith in God altogether. Some faith-healers seem to have little knowledge of the spiritual laws which, it may be supposed, operate in the work they try to do; and their failures may well be a threat to the spiritual life of those who expect to be cured, but whose expectations are not realized.

Nevertheless, this should be added: Orthodox medical methods have their failures too, but that is no argument against going to the doctor when necessary. The fact that there are many failures in the realm of spiritual healing (some of them tragic, as in medicine and surgery) does not entitle us to deny the reality of such cures as are effected. It may be that in this realm, as in that of orthodox medicine, we have yet much to learn; and just as orthodox medicine is continually extending the frontiers of knowledge, so in the realm of spiritual healing the proper persons can enlarge our vision and achievement. There have been great spiritual revivals in the past, and they have taken various forms. It may be that the spiritual revival of the future (could we possibly be on the verge of it?) will show significant developments in the realm of spiritual healing.

Two further points may be briefly noted under this heading. (1) One is that the old distinction between functional disorders and organic diseases has broken down. Recent psychology rejects it, and modern psychosomatic medicine disproves it. It used to be a convenient concept whereby the disbelievers in the possibility of faith healing explained both the failures and the successes. Nonphysical methods of healing, when successful, proved that the disorders cured were purely functional; no organic lesions, no physical pathological states were involved. The disability existed in the realm of mind, and the cure was effected in the realm of mind. If the disease

<sup>7</sup> I have referred to, and quoted from, Dr. Richardson's useful article because it is no *ex parte* statement, but the considered judgment of a sound Christian scholar.

were physical, then no cure was possible by nonphysical methods and techniques. Religiously or theologically this implied that God was a good physician, but a very poor surgeon! We can no longer distinguish between the functional and the organic in the realm of health and disease, except as a convenient fiction. Furthermore, the record is clear; competently diagnosed organic diseases have been cured by spiritual means.

(2) If the modern concept of psychosomatic medicine is a sound one—and surely it is—then there must be room both for religion and for medicine in the treatment of human disorders. One of the earliest of New Testament writers suggests as much. “Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord” (James 5:14). Anointing with oil was, in early centuries, a widely accepted medical technique, and to conjoin it with the religious exercise of praying—as James suggests—surely indicates the fact that religion and medicine can act together in the cure of disease. God’s will is our health, as well as our peace, and as we continue to learn more and more of his will and his ways, both religiously and medically, more cures will be effected, and even mankind’s greatest bodily and mental scourges may be finally vanquished.

Meanwhile, those of us who are ministers might well repersuade ourselves of the therapeutic value of prayer. Every pastor should believe in the power of prayer; many doctors do. When we go into the sickroom and pray for the sick person—*really pray*—we ought to be sure that our prayers are of great help and of prime importance. If we really pray, we will believe that; if we do not believe it, we will not really pray. In every Christian community there are people who were once desperately ill, but who are now alive, in whose recovery the prayers of pastor and friends played an important part. “Prayer is the sword of the saints,” said Francis Thompson; it is also the spiritual technique by which the saints co-operate with the Divine Spirit in the healing of the sick.

Finally, let us remember that ultimately all healing is spiritual, for all healing comes of God. Sometimes he tarries in his work; and for many, indeed, the healing takes place only when they have shuffled off this mortal coil. But it is his work; and whether it be done by the faith-healer, the psychotherapist, or the doctor, it is God who is the Great Physician. We should ever remember the memorable words of the great French doctor, Ambroise Paré, inscribed over the gateway of the College of Surgeons in Paris: “I dressed the patient’s wounds; God healed him.”

*From Cyril C. Richardson*

THE CURRENT REVIVAL of interest in spiritual healing has made us aware once more of the Church's obligation in this regard. From the very beginning Christianity was, among other things, a healing cult. The powers of the Kingdom were evidenced in the healings of Jesus, and in the similar ministry of the early Church. Moreover, throughout Christian history, every significant movement of spiritual renewal in the life of the Church has evidenced the power of religion to heal bodily as well as mental sickness. As Christians we have a duty to continue this ministry and to provide occasions through which the healing grace of God may be manifest among the sick.

That there are dangers in exercising this ministry must be evident to all who give it their serious and critical consideration. We may, for instance, arouse false hopes among the sick; we may stimulate a momentary enthusiasm whose emotional impact brings a temporary relief from pain or disablement, only to find the cure transitory and the last state of the patient worse than the first. Or again, we may become so enamored of this ministry that we neglect others and preach Christianity not primarily as the gift of right relations with God, but solely as the means for regaining bodily health. But perhaps the most insidious danger in this ministry is the assumption that by prayer or the laying on of hands or the anointing with oil we can, or ought somehow to be able, to heal all manner of sickness. With a few apparent successes we may romanticize our powers, make false claims, and eventually fall into disillusionment. The fact of the matter is that spiritual healing of a dramatic type is very rare, and has always been rare in Christian history. It is for this reason that Holy Unction underwent such a profound change in the early Middle Ages. Anointing did not invariably cure sickness; and so the benefit of that sacrament for the soul, rather than for the body, became central. Eventually, as in the Roman order, unction became "Extreme Unction," a preparation for death rather than a means of healing.

While we may regret this development and rejoice that the sacrament of healing is being, in some measure, restored in the churches, and the full import of the New Testament message in this regard being regained, it would be folly to disregard the wisdom of the past. It is one thing for us

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to be ready to provide occasions for divine healing; it is quite another for us to imagine that by prayer, or sacrament, or faith, we can invariably produce cures. The matter is not so simple, and we need a critical judgment as well as a sound faith, as we engage in this ministry. The experience of the medical bureau at Lourdes must warn us not to expect too much, and to set this ministry in its proper perspective.

Physical healing *may* be a consequence of right relations with God, but this is not always so. Spiritual healing must be understood in the context of the fact that we all get sick and eventually die. We live in the twilight between the "world" and the "Kingdom." Not yet are the powers of God fully regnant among us. Here and there they may be made manifest as a sample or installment of the Kingdom (Eph. 1:14). The powers of God do, from time to time, break in on our mortal existence, foreshadowing the final *Eschaton*. But to imagine that we live already in that period is to repeat the folly of those Christian movements which, impatient for the end, deluded their devotees into imagining the end was already here. Only when death is finally swallowed up in victory and the powers of Satan vanquished, will sickness be no more. In the Church, to be sure, we have a foretaste of the Kingdom. We know in a fragmentary way the power of love and the transforming grace of God. But always it is "not yet." The culmination is to come, and no romanticizing of the life of the Church or the ministry of healing can bridge the gulf which separates our mortality from the realization of the final promises of God.

Spiritual healing must be understood as an aspect of realized eschatology. By prayer and sacrament and faith we provide an occasion through which God may work and through which the powers of the Kingdom may be realized. But their realization is ever fragmentary and to some measure distorted by sin. We live by faith and hope, not yet by sight. Hence we cannot expect the ministry of healing to be any more perfect or efficacious than that of preaching or pastoral counseling. In his mysterious providence God may heal this one and not that. There is an ultimate mystery about all our ministrations. While we should withhold none of them because we realize their imperfection, we should also romanticize none of them.

That spiritual healing *does* occur need not be argued here. There is abundant testimony for it, both within and outside the Christian tradition. Our understanding of it has lately been furthered a little by work on psychosomatic medicine and psychical phenomena. But here it is important to stress its relatively rare occurrence and the fact that it means something different

*within* the Christian tradition than outside it. So-called "faith healing" is not, for the Christian, healing which may occur through belief in the particular healer, or through persuading oneself that one *will* be healed. The faith required is faith in Jesus as the Messiah—a point made abundantly clear in the healing stories of the gospel. It is the faith that in Christ there is revealed the power and wisdom of God.

#### THE THEOLOGY OF SICKNESS

This brings us to a consideration of the meaning of sickness. Without a balanced understanding of illness our ministry to the sick can be most misleading and even dangerous. Moreover, the prayer or liturgy we use in seeking the power of God to heal is often inadequate because it is based on an oversimplified idea of sickness.

The Bible provides us with three basic views of the meaning of sickness. Each of these is of fundamental importance, and the omission of any one of them from our liturgy leads to distortions. Let us look at them in turn.

##### SICKNESS: THE CONSEQUENCE OF SIN

In the first place, sickness is a consequence of sin. Modern man, to be sure, is not likely to take kindly to such a viewpoint. He will point out that sickness among animals appeared in this world long before the advent of man, as the fossils of extinct species evidence. Sickness and death, he claims, are accidents of our existence. To die is, as Francis Bacon observed, as natural as to be born. The Bible, however, takes a quite contrary view. It sees in death a result of sin, and in sickness a consequence of man's rebellion against God. Is such a position tenable today?

Certainly we cannot hold that the religious meaning of sickness and death has reference to man's situation alone—to claim, that is, that man apart from sin would have enjoyed an immortal life in contrast to the rest of creation. On the contrary it is necessary to understand these tragic elements of our existence within the setting of the whole creation of which man is a part. It is the whole creation, and not man only, that groans and travails, awaiting its redemption, as St. Paul observes. The "Fall" has cosmic and not merely human proportions, and is not to be understood in purely moralistic terms. It is not only the conscious act of sin which disrupts our existence. We are involved in a cosmic tragedy of which our conscious sinning is but one aspect.

So far as the relations between a particular illness and particular

conscious sins are concerned, we can only rarely trace a direct connection. It is obvious that if a man purposely overeats and then gets indigestion, that his sickness is a direct result of sinning. By disobeying the law of his nature, he is forced to accept the consequences. But most sickness is not of this character. It would appear from recent psychosomatic studies that unconscious factors are more often the cause of illness. The association, for instance, of hypertension with unbridled ambition has less to do with conscious decisions than with deep unconscious drives for which a man is not responsible in the moral sense. He is responsible, certainly, for *doing* something about his situation; but it cannot be rightly claimed that he is morally responsible for what is unconscious. The guilt of original sin is not the same thing as the guilt of conscious acts against God.

The point at which this understanding of sin and sickness has practical consequences for healing lies in the need for confession. Healing flows through openness to God and through the desire to be restored to right relations with him. This confession and repentance are essential in spiritual healing, and it is of two kinds. Where we are aware of conscious sin we must make restitution and repent before God. But the even deeper sense of guilt, born of our involvement in the sin of the race and of our unconscious rebellion against God, which theology calls original sin, must be brought to consciousness, acknowledged, accepted, repented of, and forgiven by God's grace. Here we are dealing with no moralistic confession of sins, but with something far deeper, which man has always had difficulty in accepting. There are areas of man's being whereby he participates in the disruption of creation and for which he is not personally and directly responsible in the same way as he is by a conscious act of sin. The importance, however, of this aspect of our being cannot be overemphasized. For our conscious acts are themselves rooted in these unconscious drives; and did we deal only with the former (as some types of moral theology do), we would concern ourselves only with the more superficial aspects of our estrangement from God.

The first thing, then, that a liturgy of healing requires is confession, repentance, and forgiveness. This is clear in the story of Jesus' healing of the paralytic (Mk. 2:5) and in the Church's early use of Holy Unction (James 5:14-15). We must repent, before the healing power of God can restore us to health.

Many ancient prayers of the Church's Visitation of the Sick bring out this close association between sin and sickness. We need not dwell upon them except to emphasize two things. On the one hand the connections

between sin and illness are often understood too moralistically, as if conscious sins were the direct cause of all sickness, and on the other hand a false inference has been drawn from this connection. Regarding this latter point it may be noted that many Reformation liturgies counsel the patient to "endure God's fatherly rod" in sickness (Olavus Petri) instead of urging confession as a means whereby health may be restored. Finally it may be noted that this type of emphasis, which goes far back in the Church's liturgical history and is clear even in the Gregorian Sacramentary, is especially misleading when it is the *only* emphasis in the liturgy. As we have observed already, a balanced theology of sickness must include several elements, and to omit any one of them is to fall into grave dangers. Sickness and sin are surely related, but the theme of being corrected by God's chastisement (*castigationibus emendatus*, in the famous Roman prayer *Respice quæsumus*, which so influenced Lutheran and Anglican liturgies) is an altogether insufficient approach to the question, when taken by itself.

It is of importance, however, to stress that there is deep meaning in a liturgy which opens with the ancient antiphon, "Remember not, Lord, our iniquities, nor the iniquities of our forefathers." For this brings clearly before us the fact that we participate at deep levels in the disruption of creation; and for our right relations with God a full acceptance of this is essential.

#### SICKNESS: THE REALM OF SATAN

The second point in the biblical understanding of sickness is that it is the realm of Satan. Jesus says of the woman with the curvature of the spine, that "Satan hath bound" her (Luke 13:16). This is not God's doing, but Satan's doing. What does this mean? It means that God is not the author of sickness, that sickness is one element in that estrangement from him that puts a man in the power of Evil. God is the author of life and health: where these are absent, there is the realm of Satan. So Paul, in excommunicating the incestuous man (1 Cor. 5:5) hands him over "to Satan for the destruction of the flesh," that is, puts him outside the healing powers of the Church, just as he views his own mysterious disability as a "messenger of Satan" (2 Cor. 12:7). Certainly God "sends" such a messenger (which is another way of saying that God in his Providence permits evil for a higher good)—but it is Satan and not God whose realm is that of sickness.

This emphasis is greatly needed to offset a false viewpoint which would understand sickness and death as the creation of God and as the direct punishment of a vengeful deity. On the contrary, they are Satan's realm,

and the gift of life in Jesus Christ is the gift of the final victory over Satan.

A proper liturgy of healing, therefore, will not counsel mere resignation to sickness. It will counsel hope in the power of God. This must not be an illusory hope that all sickness will necessarily be cured in this life, but the triumphant hope in the final victory of God's purposes and the conviction that even now the powers of the Kingdom may break in on the tragedies of our mortal existence.

#### SICKNESS: THE OCCASION FOR REVEALING GOD'S GLORY

This leads us to the final point. Not only is sickness a consequence of sin and an expression of the reign of Satan, but it can also be the occasion for the manifesting of God's power (John 9:3). The blind man, in this story, is not blind because of the sin of his parents or of himself, but "that the works of God should be made manifest in him." Here sickness is understood not etiologically but teleologically. The cause is the end. The cosmic disruption is permitted that the final end of God's glory may be displayed. While this viewpoint is expressed in John with peculiar emphasis so that it might seem to exclude those other understandings of sickness which we have surveyed, we would be wrong so to interpret it. The New Testament must be taken as a whole, and its several viewpoints incorporated into a balanced theology.

We return thus to the point with which we began—the breaking of God's glory and power into our mortal existence. This is a sample of the Kingdom; but the Kingdom in its fullness is "not yet." We live by faith and hope, and our ministry to the sick must not be romantic. We must provide the *occasion* for the working of God's grace, by confession, prayer, and sacrament. But we must not assume that bodily healing will invariably come this way. It is God and not we who is the healer. Our duty is to provide the opportunity so far as we can, and to wait expectant, but in patience, for each victory which foreshadows the final victory.

#### PRACTICAL CONSEQUENCES

These considerations which we have outlined on spiritual healing and sickness have necessary practical consequences, and to these we must now turn.

In the first place, the fact that spiritual healing is comparatively rare leads us to recognize that we cannot dispense with modern medicine. The minister and the doctor must work together and not imagine that their several ministries conflict with each other. The accumulated wisdom of

medicine is a blessing of God which we must enjoy no less than his other bounties. Similarly, the doctor must realize the limitations of his own art and that scientific medicine is not the only way by which healing may come. The Church has gifts and graces which at times may be more potent than those of medicine.

The second point is that we must teach our congregations the Christian meaning of sickness and death, and lead them to anticipate the ministrations we shall bring to the bedside. These ministrations will be many and various, but among them must certainly be opportunity for confession and repentance, prayers of healing and the laying on of hands or the use of holy oil. It is regrettable that the Reformation largely abandoned these sacramental forms, which are so clearly rooted in the New Testament tradition. Their importance lies in the fact that the sick are often unable to respond fully to the ministry of the Word, but can appropriate ministrations which speak to deeper levels than those of consciousness.

Then again, the parish should have special prayer groups concerned with remembering the sick. There is no greater comfort for the sick than the realization that they are not abandoned by their parish when they enter the hospital, but are continually remembered before God. The sick man often lacks the strength to pray and may find his faith sorely tried. But at this moment he will be fortified by the knowledge that others are praying for him, and he will be strengthened by their faith. The very essence of the Church lies in its fellowship, whereby we share in others' gifts and graces and are willing to accept responsibility for the needs of others. Often we have understood this responsibility purely in social or material terms. We need to recover the *spiritual* fellowship of the Church. It is well, too, that those seriously sick should be prayed for at the regular Sunday service.

Lastly we must realize that there is a special gift of spiritual healing given to some, be they laymen or clergymen, and we must avail ourselves of their endowment. This *charisma* was recognized in the New Testament and the early church, and has been continuously exercised through Christian history. Charismatic healing is certainly a reality, though it has frequently been distorted by false claims and undisciplined excesses. Yet, for all that, if we find persons who claim this gift, we should encourage them and try to help them in its exercise. It is often very difficult to study their healings or to know just how real are the cures they have effected. Often enough they do not encourage the critical judgment of the student, and grow defensive when questioned. There is no area of spiritual healing more in need of investigation than this, and no area in which the mutual respect and good

faith of healer and student are more necessary. Yet it may well be that charismatic healing is of equal, if not of superior importance, to sacramental healing. Certainly the high esteem which such healers enjoyed in the early church might suggest such a judgment. In any case, we must despise no gift which has been given to the Church, but with combined openness and wisdom "test the spirits."

If I may conclude with a personal testimony, I should say that after trying to study this field for some ten years, I am increasingly aware of its great difficulty and the constant danger of unbalanced judgments and false claims. We are very far from knowing much about spiritual healing. We lack adequate testimony regarding cases. Only at Lourdes and a few other centers is there a genuine scientific attempt to keep records and assure adequate diagnosis and "follow-up." We still lack adequate means for study and the mutual respect necessary between medico, healer, and minister. Yet we have abundant evidence of the power of religion in healing, from the days of the cult of Epidaurus in the fourth century B.C., through Christian history down to our own times. What is needed now is a serious and sympathetic attempt to study it, without fear or romanticism. But in the meantime, though we may not fully understand its operation, we must continue our ministry to the sick under the obligation laid upon us by the New Testament, so that by the laying on of hands and anointing with oil, "the prayer of faith may heal the sick" (James 5:15).

*From Don H. Gross*

## I

*"O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is thy name in all the earth! Thou whose glory above the heavens is chanted by the mouth of babes and infants . . ."*

THESE OPENING WORDS of the eighth Psalm were being fulfilled even on the ugly day when a mother discovered that her child could neither see nor hear, that she would not be able to speak or even to use her muscles in a normal way. The doctors could offer little hope. In desperation, she went to her Bishop, Austin Pardue. She was ready to join a healing sect. The Bishop said that he understood her feelings, and gave her a book on spiritual healing. It was written by a church member. The mother not only remained within the church fellowship, but became a leader in prayer for healing. The child has been helped immensely. Both the parents have since been instrumental in developing a foundation for children with like problems.

Yet that was not to be the end of the blessings that sprang from adversity. This was a challenge to the Bishop and to the Church: how shall we remedy our failure to keep Christ's command to "heal the sick . . . and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you' "?

Dr. Alfred Price, who has carried on a notable ministry of healing at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Philadelphia, was invited to preach and to conduct healing services for a week each Lent at Pittsburgh's Trinity Cathedral. The response of the people was immediate and enthusiastic. In 1949 Bishop Pardue invited Dr. Price to address the fall conference of clergy of the Diocese of Pittsburgh, and other priests also reported on various phases of spiritual healing. Not long afterwards he appointed a Healing Commission to further the work in the diocese. Other leaders in the field, such as Agnes Sanford, Gladys Falshaw, and Father Maillard, have likewise contributed to the movement among both clergy and laity in the Pittsburgh area. Interest has grown to the point where a large proportion (though still a minority) of the Episcopal churches of the diocese hold regular services of spiritual healing, and where a much larger pro-

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portion of the clergy consider spiritual healing a normal part of their ministry, with their congregations increasingly expecting this to be so. Lay participation and even leadership in prayer and the laying on of hands is also developing.

#### HEALING IN THE CHURCHES

This development within the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh is only one instance of a widespread revival of interest in spiritual healing, a resurgence touching many places and many denominations. It takes infinitely varied forms: from the practice of verbal affirmations of health and the cultivation of "positive thinking," to visits to shrines of the saints; from simple prayers during private visits to the sick, to emotionally charged "miracle services" with hundreds of people joining their voices in song and their hearts in supplication; from the healing centered in a gifted personality, to the objective power of the Sacraments.

Whatever may have brought forth the current upsurge of Christian healing, the history of the Church shows it to be a return, an approach to an earlier, more "normal" Christian life. This is true despite the fact that any full development of spiritual healing strikes most people as quite a novelty.

The true novelty, the real peculiarity, in the Christian Church is that its ministry of healing should have fallen for so long into neglect. The Gospels are full of the healing work of Jesus Christ. That work, as Christ had promised (e.g. John 14:12), was carried on in strength in the early Church. It belongs in the life of every Christian congregation today.<sup>1</sup>

An interesting report that gives some idea of the percentage of ministers of the larger Protestant denominations actually engaging in healing is the "Study of Spiritual Healing in the Churches," by Charles S. Braden in *Pastoral Psychology*. It includes the following information:

The table of results . . . shows that a total of 982 questionnaires were sent out. . . .

Of the 460 who replied, 142 gave an unqualified "yes" answer to the question, "Have you ever as a minister attempted to perform a spiritual healing?" Eighteen qualified their affirmative answer somewhat. That means that 160, all told, have had such experience at least once. This is 34.5%, or a little more than one third of all those who responded to the questionnaire, and 16.2%, or almost one of every six, of the 982 to whom the questionnaires were sent.

Of the 460, only 248 gave an unqualified "no" answer to the question. This is just under 54%. Forty-eight, or 10.4% of our respondents qualified their negative answers. . . . Percentage-wise the Episcopalians rated highest in the number of heal-

<sup>1</sup> A full account of the history and the proper place of healing in the Church is given in *Christian Healing*, by Evelyn Frost, Morehouse, 1940; also cf. *Psychology, Religion and Healing*, by Leslie Weatherhead, The Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1951.

ings in proportion to the number reporting; 65% had engaged in healing by spiritual means. Other percentages were: Presbyterians, 39%; Lutherans, 33%; United Brethren, 30%; Methodists and Disciples, 29%; and Baptists, 25%. Actually a much larger number of Methodists responded to the questionnaire than from any other denomination. I incline to think that the number involved is too small to serve as a basis for a denomination-wide generalization. There is too much possibility for chance selection to account for the higher or lower percentages.<sup>2</sup>

#### CHARISMATIC HEALING

Some of the most intense focuses for healing power are to be found in the work of certain unusually gifted individuals. Such people are referred to by St. Paul in such passages as 1 Cor. 12:4-11, as having been given, through the Spirit of God, "gifts of healing." The Greek word meaning "gifts" is *charismata*, so we speak of such gifts (and their recipients) as charismatic. The Greek refers to a freely-given favor, an unmerited gift of grace, bestowed by the will of the Holy Spirit himself.

Some Christian charismatics carry out their work in considerable independence of conventional church organizations. Others work within the traditional framework of the Church, though they certainly transcend established customs.

A charismatic of the first type who is well known in the Pittsburgh area is Kathryn Kuhlman. An example of healing through her ministry is seen in the case of Dr. A. B. When he first attended one of her services on November 19, 1950, he had the following afflictions:

- (1) A painful sinus condition. This was in the right antrum and frontal sinuses and had been treated medically ever since his college years.
- (2) The loss of most of the hearing in his right ear.
- (3) A broken collarbone. He had fallen earlier in the year and injured both his right knee and his right collarbone, or clavicle.

The right clavicle had been fractured, but in such a way that no one realized it for some time. He had been using his right arm and shoulder even more than usual, because his knee condition had required crutches and then a cane. The knee healed, but the clavicle did not. Instead it formed what is known as a "false joint." Such a condition means that the fracture does not knit; the outer covering of the bone grows over each broken end, and a callus grows around the fractured area. On November 24, 1950, he wrote to Kathryn Kuhlman telling what happened during and after that service:

<sup>2</sup> Reprinted by permission from *Pastoral Psychology*, the special issue on "The Church and Spiritual Healing," Great Neck, New York, May, 1954; and from Charles S. Braden.  
For further details of this survey, see the following article by Paul E. Johnson.—Ed.

"I want you to know that I truly had no thought as to any healing for myself. I have always been able to stand pain, so my chief concern was for my wife. . . . During your healing period you began to state that there was 'a sinus opening up. Some one is regaining hearing in an ear.' (I have been deaf in my right ear for at least fifteen years.) You went on to say, 'I see a lump the size of a walnut begining to dissolve.' My dear wife nudged me and whispered, 'She means you,' but I, just thinking of her and our son, felt nothing but a burning in my right ear which I thought was the result of a mental suggestion. Then you said, 'This is a man. I do not want this man to lose this healing. Please speak up.' I can see you now as you looked earnestly in our direction waving your left hand almost directly at our group and at the same time pounding the pulpit with your right fist. My wife kept nudging me, but even when you said that the man had a burning in his ear, I couldn't believe that I was being healed. After all, I was accustomed to the deafness in my right ear and gave it no thought.

"I drove the eighty-five miles home through the rain, a condition not conducive to helping sinusitis. On the way home my wife kept speaking to me in an ordinary tone of voice. She was sitting beside me, *on my right*. Then she called my attention to my ability to hear her and we both realized that I was not asking her to repeat. Just after we arrived home, all of [a] sudden I had to blow my nose. My sinus had opened and the pain had gone. The antrum kept draining freely all evening. I slept well all night and in the morning I was entirely free from drainage and pain. To add to my amazement, I found that I was able to use my right arm in normal motion without pain. I cannot state that the hearing in my right ear is perfect but I need not turn my left ear to her [his wife] to repeat. Perhaps the rest of the hearing will return gradually."

Dr. A. B. never received any medical or surgical treatment for his broken collarbone. It might not be impossible for a false joint to heal naturally, but any normal healing would take a number of weeks. Usually an operation would be required, in which the callus would be removed and the ends of the fracture scraped and set. Even then, several weeks would be needed for complete healing. Dr. A. B.'s symptoms of pain and limitation of motion disappeared during one day. The callus dissolved completely over a period of a few weeks.

Within the past couple of years, he has had some trouble in a quite different sinus region, but his original sinus condition has never returned. There has been no noticeable change in his hearing since November, 1950.

### A CASE OF ACQUIRED CHARISMATIC GIFTS

What appears to be a combination of the regular work of the ministry, plus what may be individual charismatic gifts, is to be seen in the case of the Rev. C. D. A mother in his parish had had two miscarriages and was having trouble during another pregnancy. He visited her regularly, taught her and her husband as much as possible about spiritual healing (though they had considerable doubts about it), brought her Communion and laid on hands for healing. She carried the baby for the full term, but the child was born with a deformity in the intestinal tract which required an operation almost immediately.

The pastor's sympathies and personal interest in the case were considerably involved by this time, and he felt that it was God's will that the baby live, so he bent every effort in prayer and fasting to open the way for healing. Further complications developed in the child's condition. But one evening as the pastor and a member of his congregation prayed together in the church for the baby, they each felt a strong assurance that he would be healed. With a great sense of relief and uplifted with joy, the Rev. C. D. went home. Shortly afterward, uncontrollable vibrations came in intermittent waves through various parts of his body. He had never experienced this before, but knew of similar effects on people during healings, and that this was often called "the power of God." This increased even more his confidence that the baby was being healed and he decided to telephone the hospital to learn what was happening there.

However, this new power seized his muscles more and more, and as he approached the phone he was held in an iron grip so that it was quite impossible for him to touch it. He decided that the Lord didn't want him to call, and went to bed. Though less severe, the vibrations continued to come from time to time, and included motions that it would have been impossible to produce voluntarily. It was as though a sort of "break-through" to a higher level of power had occurred.

In the morning he called the hospital. He learned that during the night, at the very time he had tried to phone the hospital, the child had died. To the young pastor, this news was an almost unbelievable blow. He went at once to the hospital to see the parents. Their attitude was excellent, and the mother was grateful for such hope as she had had, feeling that otherwise the anxiety would have been much more difficult.

The Rev. C. D. was greatly relieved, since his main concern at this point was that his previous assurance might only have added to the parents'

disappointment. He had found, too, a strong conviction that through death the baby had truly been healed and had entered into a new and eternal life. And he discovered that his effectiveness in the ministry of healing was on a new and higher plane from that time on.

Later, Agnes Sanford held a healing mission which he attended. He brought members of his wife's family to her for special prayers. She laid on hands privately with them, placing her hands on the part of the body which was ill, and asked the Rev. C. D. to participate with her. She said she wanted "to connect him with the same current" that flowed through her. One of the prayers in this manner was for the father-in-law's heart, which improved markedly within the next two days. It was not completely and permanently healed, but Mr. C. D. found that whenever he prayed in the same way with his father-in-law the heart would be noticeably improved at once.

Mr. C. D. found, too, that after this experience with Mrs. Sanford, he could use her method of healing. He always felt a reaction of some sort: vibrations or pulsations; tingling; heat; a feeling of a cool wind or breath; a filling with an energy that gave a sense of peace and serenity; or occasionally a draining of all energy, almost to the point of collapse. At times the sick person felt some of these effects in his own body, at other times not. Sometimes healing occurred at once, sometimes later, sometimes it was complete, sometimes partial, sometimes it was through medical help, sometimes there was no observable physical healing; always there was spiritual help, a closer relationship to God.

This case of the Rev. C. D. illustrates some variety of approach to healing in the Christian ministry. It is an instance of the transmission, at least to some degree, of charismatic gifts from one person to another, and of their use as a part of a regular pastoral ministry. The second of these gifts is connected with a sacramental type of action—the laying on of hands—and is an example of physical and spiritual and (though not illustrated here) mental benefits being mediated through a physical action backed up with an attitude of faith and love.

The idea of special "gifts of healing" sometimes tends to discourage those who have never had evidence of any special talents in spiritual healing. It may be reassuring to know that Mr. C. D. had had no such evidence, either. Nor has he ever noticed any particular psychic powers. His ministry to the sick in his congregation had deepened his interest in the matter—in fact, had given it urgency—but his approach was characterized mainly by a desire to learn (particularly from those who had done outstanding

work in healing), a continuous and open-minded inclination to try, persistent prayer that God might heal through him, and a willingness to become involved (though not swamped) in the pain and problems of his people. He was encouraged by reading in Agnes Sanford's book, *The Healing Light*, that anyone could be a channel of God's restoring power. And in his later direct contact with her, he found that the gifts of healing could be received both by word of mouth and by participation in acts of healing. The conclusion from all this is that there is reward in following St. Paul's admonition to "earnestly desire the higher gifts."

#### SACRAMENTAL HEALING

The form of spiritual healing most easily adapted to a normal parish ministry is that which makes use of the grace offered by God in the Sacraments. It would seem that the exceptional healing activity within the Episcopal Church, compared with other major denominations, is due to two factors, one of which is its strong sacramental emphasis. (The other factor is its freedom and adaptability as contrasted with the Roman Church. Rome also stresses the Sacraments, but is hampered by medieval traditions which often tend to cancel out healing efficacy. The most striking example of this is their Extreme Unction, which began as anointing for healing but is now interpreted by Rome as mainly a preparation for death!) It is to be expected that the growth of healing within major Protestant groups will be accompanied by a wider appreciation of the spiritual power mediated by the Sacraments—including those outward and visible signs of inward and spiritual grace whose exact form has not been specified by Christ, but which are nonetheless means through which, by faith, we may receive the renewing energy of his risen life.

The fact that at present, Baptism is received mostly in infancy by members of Christian families tends to obscure its healing effects, though repentance from sin and redemption through faith in Christ are plainly at the heart of Baptism. Since spiritual healing in its full sense includes not only the body and the mind, but a restored relationship of love between men and God and between one another—and since this healing of the spirit is the matter of greatest importance, and, in fact, the test of effectiveness of spiritual healing, Baptism by its very nature, along with the other Sacraments, is a means of healing. This is seen particularly clearly in the Baptism of adult converts from paganism; in the early Church, Christ's healing power was stressed even further by the practice of immediately preceding Baptism by exorcism.

The Holy Communion offers us a share in the life of Christ: not only the body broken and the blood shed on the cross for our salvation, but his body, soul, and Spirit reunited and restored in his glorious resurrection and reigning in his ascension. The ancient Liturgy of St. James prays "that it may not be for condemnation to Thy people that the mystery of salvation has been administered by us, but for remission of sins, of renewal of souls and bodies,"<sup>3</sup> and the Liturgy of St. Mark, probably also written before the third century, asks God regarding the reception of the elements of the Holy Communion, "That to all of us who partake thereof they may tend to healing . . . the renewal of soul, body, and spirit. . . ."<sup>3</sup> A similar emphasis upon the healing of both body and soul is seen in the Book of Common Prayer:<sup>4</sup> "Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body, and our souls washed through his most precious blood, and that we may evermore dwell in him and he in us"; while during the administration of the Sacrament, the Priest says, "the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life." Similar words accompany the delivery of the Cup. It is to be expected that the Real Presence of Jesus of Nazareth will be accompanied by the same power to heal that we see him exercising as we read the Gospels.

Confirmation, which is the completion of Baptism, and a share in the Pentecostal gift of the Holy Spirit through the laying on of the Bishop's hands (or in some Christian communions by anointing), implies the promise of God to continue the spiritual gifts that characterized the Christians of the New Testament and the early Church.

This includes the gifts of healing. God has poured out the healing charisma in great power upon many whose tradition does not include Confirmation. How little faith, then, is shown by those who have received this Sacrament when they are reluctant to exercise the gifts of the Spirit!

Ordination, with its assurance of the pastoral authority and grace given to the Apostles, is incompatible with any notion that God intends to limit miracles to the days of the first century. Those of us who consider ourselves in the Apostolic Succession might do well to talk less about our venerable heritage and spend more of our time demonstrating it!

The harmonious knitting of family relationships that comes with a truly Christian marriage has probably become more and more evident as

<sup>3</sup> As quoted in Frost, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

<sup>4</sup> The American Prayer Book of 1928, p. 82.

the problems of divorce and of juvenile delinquency have mounted. Holy Matrimony, with its enduring love and deep mutual responsibility before God, is a source of healing in its own way.

Absolution, the Sacrament of God's Forgiveness, is well known for its psychiatric benefits. But while the psychiatrist is primarily concerned with the emotional stresses caused by guilt feelings, the gospel is the means of removing guilt itself. And while pastoral counseling is of great importance, it is no substitute for Absolution. The peculiar merit of private Confession and Absolution lies in these factors: (1) The explicit, crystallized recognition of sinful behavior and habits on the part of the penitent, making conscious much that he may have previously hidden from himself; (2) the honest confession of sin as sin, with no excuses; (3) the completely impersonal role of the priest; (4) the individual, authoritative assurance of the forgiveness of Christ to the faithful penitent; and (5) the opportunity for the penitent to make a concrete outward expression of repentance.

The usual dangers of auricular confession arise when it is considered to be compulsory, not voluntary. Points 1 and 2 can also be dealt with on a counseling basis; possibly 4 and 5 could be likewise, especially if 5 involved an act of restitution. On the other hand, valuable counseling can be given during a confession. In these ways counseling and auricular confession complement each other. But point 3 cannot really be duplicated in pastoral counseling, and its unique value is on shifting the emphasis from the pastor to God. For this reason, it is often very wise to conclude a counseling session with a formal Absolution, in the church, with the priest in vestments to exalt his office and eliminate him as a particular personality.

An example of this use of Absolution was seen when Mrs. K. came to the Rev. L. M. in great distress because she had considered going out with someone other than her husband. Mr. K. was away for long periods because of his work, and a neighbor had asked Mrs. K. for a date. Out of loneliness (they had no children) she had impulsively agreed. When the time came, she did not keep the arrangement; but she had a tender conscience, and felt strongly that she had broken her marriage vow.

During counseling, the natural strain of living alone so much was pointed out, and so was the fact that she had not actually even gone out with the other man. Yet she had known these facts before, and still had not been able to escape a growing inner conflict. Possibilities for outside activities were discussed so that she might better avoid the temptation in the future, and she made some plans in that direction. But that still did not remove her sense of guilt for what she had already done. She could

have been given Christ's promises of forgiveness, and prayer could have been offered that God would forgive and provide strength for the future. As a matter of fact, that was done. In some cases this might have been sufficient. Still, Mrs. K. had been a regular attendant at Church and had been hearing the promises of forgiveness, but somehow she had not been able to receive them and apply them to herself—that was why she had come to her pastor.

So it was suggested that she make a formal confession before leaving. She agreed, and after taking enough time to prepare herself, she made her confession at the altar rail and received Absolution. The next time she was in church, she told her minister that everything was all right again. She had been completely free of the problem ever since. Not only that, but she seems to have no emotional involvement with her minister other than a natural gratitude for his help; the personality entanglements that so often plague both the psychiatric and the counseling approaches were avoided.

We come finally to the one Sacrament specifically intended to be a channel of health: Anointing or Laying on of Hands for Healing. Anointing is considered more of a priestly function, since it is based partly on James 5:14-15, which enjoins calling for the "elders of the church" for prayer and unction. The Laying on of Hands is not only used in a sacramental sort of approximation to Anointing, but, as has been mentioned, is common in charismatic healing. It provides a simple link between the sacramental and the charismatic approach—though anointing is likewise associated with special spiritual gifts.

#### HEALING SERVICES IN THE AVERAGE PARISH

The Laying on of Hands or Anointing, which we may call the Sacrament of Healing, opens up the possibility of regularly scheduled special services of spiritual healing in the average congregation. These services may incorporate some of the advantages of the prayer group and even of personal testimony, along with the advantages of emotional discipline and competent instruction. They fall into two main types, depending upon whether or not they are developed around a celebration of the Holy Communion.

An example of a rather nondenominational form of healing service using the Laying on of Hands is to be found on page 13 of *Religion and Health* by Alfred W. Price, D.D.<sup>5</sup> This is the sort of service that he has

<sup>5</sup> Rector of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Philadelphia 7, Pa.

used with great effectiveness in a downtown situation. Much of it can also be adapted to other types of services. It would be preceded by a sermon on healing, and consists of comforting Bible quotes; petitions, intercessions, and thanksgiving for healing; the Laying on of Hands at the altar rail, with prayer. It ends with a blessing.

Typical healing services using the liturgical forms of the Episcopal Church have been outlined by the Healing Commission of the Diocese of Pittsburgh.<sup>6</sup> One type uses a shortened Evening Prayer Service (with the psalm and Bible lesson relevant to healing) followed by an instruction, intercession for a list of the sick, thanksgiving for help received, and the Laying on of Hands, concluding with a blessing. The other type uses either a normal simple Communion service or else uses the Communion of the Sick (but in the Church), with an instruction on healing and with the Laying on of Hands and/or Anointing following the reception of Holy Communion.

At the author's parish, where the typical attendance at a healing service is quite small, the instruction is usually accompanied by informal discussion of progress being made, and of particular problems or interests concerning healing which any individual may care to bring up. Included in this is the mutual encouragement that comes from hearing of God's help to the sick in specific instances, the open opportunity to express gratitude to God, and the individual interest in specific cases that makes intercession more effective. Of course there are dangers here of overpersonalization and indiscretion; this informal aspect cannot be adapted everywhere.

Healing services and other forms of ministry to the sick can be furthered by many types of cooperative effort. One of the most effective organizations in the Episcopal Church has been the Order of St. Luke, founded by the late John Gaynor Banks. Its membership is not limited to Episcopalian. It publishes *Sharing*, a monthly journal of Christian healing.<sup>7</sup> Besides articles on healing, one of its unusual features is a directory of regularly scheduled healing services in churches throughout the United States.

#### APPLICATION IN VISITING THE SICK

The various sides of spiritual healing (and we have by no means covered them all) may be applied, as the occasion demands, in visiting the sick. A case that illustrates several of the possibilities is that of a man in my own parish, whom we will call Mr. Jones.

<sup>6</sup> They may be obtained from the Rev. Eugene Marsden Chapman, Chairman, P. O. Box 171, Beaver, Pa.

<sup>7</sup> Address: 2243 Front Street, San Diego 1, California.

In making a routine pastoral call on his wife, I found that Mr. Jones was also at home; he was recuperating from a mild heart attack. He had had a heart condition for some time, but was able to continue at work until the attack occurred. Almost on an impulse, I asked Mr. Jones to lie down on the livingroom couch. I asked Mrs. Jones (who had previously shown active interest in spiritual healing) to kneel beside me, and together we placed our hands beneath and above his heart. As I prayed aloud, all three of us felt a pulsating vibration, perhaps at the surface of Mr. Jones's body. Mr. Jones then felt a painful sensation which moved from the region of his heart to the left side of his neck, where a small area of perspiration developed. I also felt heat in my body. We all sensed that something had happened. Within the next couple of days, Mr. Jones visited his doctor, who was surprised to find no trace of the heart trouble.

Mrs. Jones quoted her husband as saying, "I'll never doubt again." He came to a few healing services, and to fewer regular church services. He had seldom attended church for some time, though he had been regular in earlier years. It was as if something were holding him back. Rumor had it that his difficulty was due to some very unfair treatment he had once received by other members of the church. Yet he did not hesitate to tell others about his healing.

Several years passed (with his heart remaining normal) when he was stricken with an excruciating gall bladder attack while on vacation. He was moved to a hospital near his home, where I visited him. Mrs. Jones and one of their two daughters were also present. I asked Mrs. Jones to join me in laying on hands over the painful region, and as I led in prayer, we thanked God that the healing was taking place. Mrs. Jones felt a motion as though something were shifting position inside her husband's body; I noticed a vibration. The whole family had been under a great strain for several days, and had been quite concerned about the outcome. The visit and prayer broke the strain and the eyes of all three were filled with tears. That evening Mrs. Jones phoned her other daughter. When told what had happened, the daughter was overcome with emotion. As soon as she was able, she asked, "When was Father Gross there?" Her mother told her. It developed that at that time the daughter was praying alone at home for her father, and suddenly saw a light and was told, "Don't worry. He will be all right."

Two days later, I went to the hospital again. Mrs. Jones told me about her telephone conversation. The pain had not left, so prayer was offered, with hands imposed as before.

An infection had caused a fever. When the temperature returned to normal, an operation was planned to remove the gall bladder. Arrangements were made for me to bring Holy Communion, but I was unable to go until late in the evening before the operation. Mr. Jones had been very fearful throughout the day. He had undergone several previous operations, including some dangerous complications, and he did not relish any more surgery. After receiving Communion, followed once more by the Laying on of Hands, Mr. Jones relaxed and said, "Now I know it will be all right."

The gall bladder was removed, and Mr. Jones gradually regained his strength. On a subsequent visit, I was introduced to Mr. Jones's new hospital roommate, Mr. Smith, who was there due to a heart attack. The two men had known each other years before. Mr. Jones had told him about the healing of his heart, and wanted me to pray for his roommate in a similar way. As Mr. Jones prayed silently, I laid on hands. Both the Jones family and Mr. Smith felt that his condition improved from that time.

After Mr. Jones recovered, his wife asked that a special prayer of thanks be offered publicly. Once again Mr. Jones accompanied his wife to church.

The case of Mr. Jones is a rather complex interweaving of charismatic and sacramental healing. It starts with the intercessions of others for Mr. Jones; it leads to Mr. Jones's intercession for another. It begins with the renewal of the body; it ends with the freeing of the soul from resentment. It is set against the invisible backdrop of the patience of God and the loving dominion of God.

God wills healing. He offers it in a myriad of ways—medically, mentally, spiritually—and we can rejoice especially that the revitalizing power of Christ is with us so abundantly in our time.

## From Paul E. Johnson

THE MIRACLE OF HEALING has never been so impressive as in this age of science. Every step forward in the recent history of the medical sciences deepens the mystery of healing. Along the vast frontier of scientific research we know more each year about the causes of illness. New drugs are powerful allies in the battle for health. The actual healing is what we wait for when we have done all we can by scientific means, and the wonder of it is the more profound in the light of medical knowledge.

It is evident by now that health arises from a complex network of many intertwining causes so intricate as to involve the whole man in all his relationships. To disturb the delicate balance of any one of these vital factors may invite illness. Among the many research specialists one may focus upon this and others upon that set of causes as they affect health adversely or favorably. One medical writer<sup>1</sup> sums up his extensive research by insisting that of all the factors in recovery from illness the most significant is the will to live. Other writers may refer to the libido or love or ego strength; and yet however the terms may differ, there is a converging upon inner motives that contribute to illness and health. And these inner determinants are not physical but spiritual.

There is a spirit that is conducive to health, and when it is absent a person suffers illness. The healing spirit may be contagious so that others gain health through its manifestation. Physicians may carry a "bedside manner" that inspires confidence in the sick and gives added courage to get well. This contagious spirit is known in religious circles as faith, and it is recognized as the essential condition in religious healing.

Naturally, faith is a personal quality that varies widely according to the person and situation. It cannot be commanded at will, nor can it be readily measured. There will, of course, be those who smile skeptically when spiritual healing is mentioned. And they may be devout religious leaders who have faith in other areas of life, yet who do not see faith as an agent of healing. But their number is fewer since the rise of psychosomatic medicine, where the emotional causes are recognized to be as crucial

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<sup>1</sup> Hutschnecker, Arnold, M.D., *The Will to Live*, Crowell, 1953.

as the physical in health and illness. If emotional attitudes are important components in illness, as the modern physician is ready to grant, then faith is an emotional attitude that is very apt to be decisive in the turn from illness to health.

## I

The National Council (formerly the Federal Council) of Churches of Christ in America has for many years shown a continuing interest in this question of health. Since 1938 a Commission of Religion and Health has brought together representatives of the healing professions (especially physicians, psychiatrists, and nurses) to consider with religious leaders the interrelation of health with spiritual resources. So many inquiries were received about such healing that in 1948 a Committee on Spiritual Healing was established to study it.

Professor Charles S. Braden of Northwestern University was asked by this committee to conduct a survey of healing experiences known to pastors of Protestant churches. After a pilot study in the Chicago area he selected a key pastor in each of twenty-seven cities, and asked him to distribute questionnaires to pastors in the major denominations in his community. Altogether 982 questionnaires were sent out and 460 replies received, or 46.7 per cent of the total.

For the purpose of this study, spiritual healing was defined as "healing effected through other than the recognized methods of scientific medicine and those of the trained psychiatrist, that is, healing wrought directly through religious faith in some sense." Many who replied insisted that religion should not be set over against scientific healing as though no relationship existed between them. It was often noted that all healing, by whatever means, is of God and that religion is not to work apart from but along with the use of every available scientific procedure. Others insisted that healing is not always spectacular, but proceeds in quiet and often gradual changes for the better.

In reply to the question, "Have you ever as a minister attempted to perform a spiritual healing?", 142 or 34.5 per cent of those replying gave an unqualified "yes"; and 248 or 54 per cent gave an unqualified "no." Forty-eight or 10.4 per cent gave a qualified "no," such as "if you mean this, no," but would then go on to allege that healing came from prayer or counseling, which was equivalent to a spiritual healing ministry. Summing up the total number of qualified and unqualified "yes" replies with the qualified "no" replies gives 206 or approximately 43 per cent of the pastors reporting some use of spiritual healing in one way or another. Of

the 982 questionnaires sent out 21 per cent actually report spiritual healing.

It is impossible to know how those who did not return the questionnaires would have replied, but Dr. Braden infers that these would raise and not lower the percentage of affirmative replies, because more time and effort is required to fill out the questionnaire affirmatively with the detailed information requested. He had particularly urged those having negative replies to fill in the one or two easy questions with "no," and return the blank in the stamped addressed envelope provided. A spot check further indicated that some not replying said they would say "yes," but did not find the time to fill in the detailed responses required.

In what kind of churches does spiritual healing occur most frequently? According to this study, it occurs in churches of all sizes and economic classes except the upper class. We find 20 per cent of the healing in churches of more than 1,000 membership, 38 per cent in churches with 500 to 1,000 members, and 37 per cent in churches of less than 500 members. As to economic level, only eleven were in the low income group, fifty-four in the lower middle group, thirty-nine in the upper middle group.

On tabulating the variety of diseases reported healed, it appears that sixty-four are different enough to be listed separately. But on closer scrutiny these fall into broad classifications. The largest number of healings, twenty or 12½ per cent of the total, are from mental illness such as extreme anxiety, hallucinations, neuroses, depression, abnormal fears, schizophrenia, and nervous fatigue. All but one of the mental cases had been medically diagnosed and treated. About half had been pronounced hopeless. In all but three cases the cure was reported as permanent.

Of the organic diseases the largest number, eighteen, were of cancer, as of the lungs, the spine, the mouth, the duodenum, the bone, etc. In almost every case we are informed the diagnosis had been made by a competent physician with medical attendance. A Methodist minister in the mid-west reported a case diagnosed as lung cancer by a group of physicians in consultation, who gave the patient, a woman of thirty-seven years of age, one week to live. The minister prayed with her, she confessed, and forgave a person she hated. The next day the lungs were found to be clear of cancer, and after two years the woman was still well.

Heart trouble was next in order with fifteen healings reported. A man of fifty who suffered a coronary thrombosis had been so diagnosed and treated, but was considered incurable. Following prayer he was healed and lived six years. Most of the cases were reported as permanently healed, and only two experienced a recurrence.

Five cases of paralysis were reported healed. A two-year-old child, who was diagnosed by a physician as having infantile paralysis, was permanently cured following prayer by a Presbyterian minister. In another case a woman of fifty-five, diagnosed and treated by a physician as incurable, gained permanent recovery following group prayer. Four cases of tuberculosis were reported healed.

Other cases were reported of pneumonia, spinal meningitis, arthritis, stomach ailments, ulcers, alcoholism, brain hemorrhage, severe burns, crushed or broken bones, yellow jaundice, kidney trouble, varicose veins, concussion, ruptured appendix, intestinal blockage, diabetes, influenza, chronic asthma, mastoiditis, excessive bleeding after childbirth, etc.

The method of healing employed may be seen from the following table.

METHODS OF HEALING REPORTED BY PROTESTANT MINISTERS  
IN TWENTY-FIVE CITIES (160 CASES)

	Total Organic	Percent		Percent	Total Cases
		Using Each	Total Mental		
Prayer . . . . .	98	70	19	95	117
Forgiveness . . . . .	44	31.4	13	65	57
Affirmation . . . . .	35	25	14	70	49
Laying on Hands . . . . .	33	23.6	4	20	37
Anointing . . . . .	24	17.1	2	10	26
Rituals . . . . .	14	10	4	20	18
Others . . . . .	18	12.8	6	31.6	24

*Prayer* is most frequently used of all the methods employed, with assurance of forgiveness, affirmation of faith, laying on of hands, anointing with oil, and rituals, in descending order. Other methods were in most cases not specified, though Scripture reading, listening, and counseling were indicated. The laying on of hands, rituals, and anointing were used less with mental patients. Affirmation and forgiveness show larger percentages in reference to mental than to organic illness, though ranking next to prayer in both.

Distribution by age is widespread, ranging from ages one to seventy-nine. The majority, eighty-nine, were above the age of thirty, while only twenty-five were under thirty. The number of men and women was about equal. Of the 123 pastors who reported both healings and denominational affiliations, forty-six were Methodist, nineteen were Episcopalian, eighteen Presbyterian, fourteen Lutheran, seven Baptists, five Disciples, three United Brethren, two each Congregational, Evangelical and Reformed, and Nazarene. Five other denominations reported one each.

It is significant that 80 per cent of the healings were declared perma-

ment. Only nine cases were listed without indicating medical diagnosis; and only ten failed to specify adequate medical treatment. More than half of the patients healed became "more religious" and only six reported no change religiously. More than half of the pastors who reported healings had participated in more than one. When asked, "Do you preach healing as an integral part of religion?" 80 per cent answered in the affirmative, and 55 per cent thought it should be a part of the regular work of the pastor.

The facts uncovered by this survey are in many ways remarkable. It is surprising (1) to find that 43 per cent of the pastors responding and 21 per cent of all those questioned have participated in spiritual healings. We may have assumed that such healing was confined to the minority religious groups, and it is notable to discover it is widely practiced in the major Protestant denominations. It is also significant (2) to find medical diagnosis and treatment reported in all but nine or ten cases. This indicates more than scientific appraisal of the disease and the healing. It also implies the collaboration of the physician and the pastor in teamwork for health, or at least that medical and religious resources have both been called upon, not neglecting one for the other. (3) The miracle of healing is baffling to both science and religion. It may occur in a variety of ways, now sudden and dramatic, or again a quiet and gradual growth.

The results are particularly remarkable in view of the limiting way in which the concept of spiritual healing was defined, to set it in contrast to "the recognized methods of scientific medicine and those of the trained psychiatrist." The contagious faith which the physician brings to the patient by his own integrity and confidence is a recognized method of scientific medicine, which may also characterize the pastor in his healing ministry. In all healing the spiritual factors, therefore, interact with the physical and social factors. If this is so, then the definition used by the committee would seem to rule out many valid situations of spiritual healing and lead to negative rather than affirmative replies from the pastors surveyed.

Another form of spiritual healing likely to escape the net of this questionnaire is pastoral counseling. For it is excluded by the phrase which rules out the methods of the psychiatrist, who proceeds by a therapeutic relationship of listening to feelings expressed, accepting the person with distressing conflicts, and helping him to work through them by insight and personal growth. This is also the method of the pastoral counselor who enters a healing relationship in religious perspective. It would not be a rash observation to note that among Protestant churches today, pastoral counseling is the most prevalent form of spiritual healing.

## II

To look more closely at the healing work of pastoral counseling, a case study will be introduced with the permission of a person whom we will designate by the pseudonym Joel Mark. He came to the Pastoral Counseling Service at Boston University on November 4, 1952, on referral from a psychiatrist. During the three years in which he saw a counselor once a week his progress in health was notable, and recently he met with the staff to consider the situation together. At regular intervals he has consulted with and been examined by his physician, who reports the medical examination of December 9, 1955, as follows:

Joel Mark came in to see me on December 9, for a complete physical examination and proctoscopic evaluation of his old ulcerative colitis. I must say that I was very delighted to find Mr. Mark in excellent physical condition without any significant abnormalities. Examination of his lower bowel with the sigmoidoscope revealed what was essentially a normal bowel for a distance of 20 cm. There is no evidence of bleeding or irritability of the lower intestinal tract and I believe that we can consider his ulcerative colitis healed at this point.

This is the third consecutive year in which this physician has reported an essentially normal colon and sigmoid, after twelve years of ulcerative colitis. The story to follow was told by Mr. Mark to the staff of the Pastoral Counseling Service.

Joel Mark was born in Nebraska (names of places will be changed to respect the confidential nature of the information given) in 1914, one year after the marriage of his parents. His mother was nineteen years old at the time of the birth, and his father, then twenty-four, was a Methodist minister. The father had wanted to be a surgeon, but from the day he was born he was destined by his mother to be a minister, for in her words "the ministry is the only honorable profession." When Joel's father, whom we may call Isaac Mark, completed his theological course he started for the Ph.D., but health problems interfered and he became pastor of a church in Nebraska. A year after the birth of Joel he returned to continue work on his Ph.D., but again his health failed and he had to give up the attempt to become a "Doctor." When the war came he volunteered for the Medical Corps, and after two epidemics of influenza in which he and the medical doctor were the only two men in the unit on their feet, Isaac developed genito-urinary tuberculosis which afflicted him the remainder of his life.

The family then moved to Colorado, where Isaac Mark became head of the Department of History at the State Teachers College. Joel was the

only child, and due to the illness of the father, his mother was occupied in caring for him and seemed to have no margin of affection left for the son. Isaac was in politics as chairman of the school board, and in trying to clean up corruption aroused opposition that reflected adversely on the son. To keep the family record above reproach, the son was never permitted to attend private parties or have social dates with young people of his age in the home town. On the other hand, he could take the car and drive to another town where his activities were not directly supervised; and Joel came to feel that his father cared more for his own reputation than his son's happiness. When Joel brought home good grades his father would take the credit by saying, "Look whose son he is"; but when the grades were not so good, no sympathy was shown, and the father would scornfully say, "We can't all be Phi Beta Kappa" (which he was).

Joel secretly longed to be a surgeon, but thought his father wanted him to be a minister, which he would not be. Yet he did try desperately to win his father's approval. He completed high school in three years, matriculated at the state university when he was fifteen, and had his Master of Arts degree before he was twenty-one. Early in the fall of this year his father died, after having made groping attempts, but never reaching a reconciliation with his only son. The mother, who was unprepared for her husband's death, went to pieces and for over ten years lived in complete emotional darkness before psychiatric aid helped her recover perspective.

Joel was married nine months after his father's death, but with the father's apparent approval of the prospective bride. Six months after the marriage, Joel was out of work due to the recession of 1937, and he decided to return to school.

At the age of twenty-four he entered a technological institute to become a chemical engineer. His background in engineering and mathematics was insufficient, and it was a struggle to make the grade. The dean called him into his office and said, "The most serious mistake we have made in ten years was to admit you to this engineering program. If you ever amount to anything I will be surprised." He failed part of the course, but recovered and came through with some A grades and a Bachelor of Science degree in Chemical Engineering. In 1940, at the age of twenty-six, just after finishing this academic work, their first child was born and trouble started with his wife. It was in February, 1940, that he began to suffer with ulcerative colitis.

For three and a half years he was in the research department of a paper mill in Wisconsin. The Director of Research was a driver, and could

not tolerate a worker who was sick from time to time. Joel consulted physicians at the Mayo Clinic but was not helped by the strictly medical treatment. He felt insecure in his job and so transferred to the research department of a large chemical company, who, in two and one-half years, made him a group leader in charge of the paper laboratory. As a result of his work twelve patents were granted, upon which the company is now earning in excess of \$5,000,000 per annum.

In spite of this he was discharged in 1952 with no satisfactory explanation; but as he said, "personalities entered into it." By this time he and his wife had three growing children and were buying a home, with a good deal of tension and distress in their relationship. He was seriously ill with a disease that could easily become fatal.

About a year before this last crushing experience, Joel had been referred to a psychiatrist in a Boston hospital by his family physician. The psychiatrist was unable to continue treating him, and referred him successively to three other psychiatrists, but none of them were able to continue or satisfy him. Finally, the first psychiatrist said, "Joel, I don't know what you're going to do. You're going to have to learn to live with yourself."

"Doctor," said Joel, "don't you even know a minister I can go to?"

Then it was the psychiatrist referred him to the Pastoral Counseling Service. That day Joel telephoned to ask for an appointment, and two days later he came for the first interview with a pastor who had specialized at the Ph.D. level in psychology and counseling. The first session with the counselor was described by Joel as a very warm meeting, yet without any sentimental sympathy. "It was just plain, downright understanding. We were at the bottom and we actually started up then."

The fourth interview, from the minute he walked into the counseling room, was particularly significant.

I felt a third presence. Now this, remember, I am relating as I felt it, and it is a reasonably objective proposition, I believe, because of my training. We have been taught unless you can measure it, forget it! Well, this is a case of something we could not measure in physical terms. Yet it was just as *real* as if you could measure it with a yardstick.

With the counselor he worked through his emotional difficulties. He explored his feelings toward his family and his vocation, and came to see their relatedness. The psychiatrist had helped him to discover his focal problem as hatred toward his father. This hostility was evidently transferred to his professors in school and later to his superiors in chemical research. He was engaged also in a running combat with God. He was not

easy to live with at home, his relation to his wife was very aggravating, and his children suffered from his inability at that time to give them the affection they needed.

He was re-enacting the frustrations and conflicts of his own childhood. The turning point came as he found himself accepted, when everyone else had seemed to reject him, by a pastoral counselor who stood for his father and his God. He sensed that the counselor cared what happened to him, and began to feel that God also cared. Toward the close of an interview it became natural to pray, first Joel and then the counselor praying, acknowledging that the task was too big for them alone and seeking to draw on the resources of God with which to grow.

*Joel:* I have said that we could sum up the experience here in one word of four letters, spelled L-O-V-E, and for the first time in my life I have felt its impact. I have never felt here that I was a burden, unwanted, impossible, a dumb dodo, nothing like that. In fact, sometimes I felt insecure because somebody didn't lay the whip on me. . . .

*Staff II:* So you felt that you counted as a person.

*Joel:* I counted as a person, yes; I wasn't a case, but a *person*. I've always been an individual here and the personal approach helped plus the fact that I have felt continuously that I was understood on the basis of being a Methodist minister's son who had, shall we say, strayed from the path. . . . Basically I wanted to be accepted by my own father. I think that I want to be loved by my own father. I felt that I was not loved, and here I have found a very reasonably healthy substitute.

*Counselor I:* It seems to me we arrived at some conclusion that your inability to establish or continue a relationship with your father who died had prompted your physical difficulty; and from then on you began to improve physically.

*Joel:* No question about it.

*Counselor I:* That to my mind was the turning point. . . .

*Staff II:* That he couldn't recover the losses in his relationship to his father?

*Joel:* No, that I couldn't battle my father any more, that's right.

*Counselor I:* Father was not there.

*Joel:* I didn't have anything to beat on. I didn't have any—anything any more. I mean my father was all I had. I had no brothers, no sisters. My mother was helpless in that picture.

*Staff II:* He was the emotional focus of your life.

*Joel:* He certainly was.

*Staff III:* At what point in the counseling did this take place?

*Counselor I:* This was fairly early—I'd say it was in the first two months.

*Joel:* That is correct. By December there was a marked decrease in the hemorrhaging, and by the following November when my family doctor examined me, he said it was wonderful; he had never seen anything like it. . . .

*Staff I:* At one time did you feel God was against you?

*Joel:* I felt that until I came here. I mean I never wanted to believe that God

really cared. If he did not care then he would not want me to be a minister—and I would not have to be a hypocrite such as I saw in my father.

*Staff 1:* Has your feeling toward God changed in these experiences?

*Joel:* Definitely, yes. And the turning point, as I say, was that fourth interview. It was—it was almost as if you could see the light over the hill. I still can't see over the top of the hill quite—but it's getting there. The walls no longer exist. We're beyond the walls, but we're not quite over the top of the hill.

Further, it was at about this same time that my counselor began to get to me with the idea that God is a forgiving Father, always ready to accept us, but that for Him to make Himself felt, we must forgive ourselves even as He forgives us. This was a difficult concept to accept, at the time, in the face of my deep-seated feelings of guilt.

In conclusion, what have we learned about a healing like this?

(1) Illness afflicts the whole personality and not one organ. It affects the inner spiritual life and cannot be cured unless there is healing of the spirit.

(2) The sense of well-being we desire affects our relationships with other persons too. If the relationships are loaded with feelings of anxiety, guilt or hostility, then we may expect health to falter.

(3) To regain health a new wholeness is needed in the person and his relationships to other persons. Counseling, to be effective, must be a healing relationship of accepting and understanding love.

(4) While a turning point may come early in the counseling, there is often need of a continuing relationship to work through the emotional conflicts and grow into larger wholeness.

(5) The pastor who gives healing love may help to fulfill the unmet needs for an accepting parent, and open the way to a forgiving Heavenly Father.

We have no desire to force conclusions upon anyone. The skeptical pastor or scientist is entitled to his doubts and he should be heard. He may appeal to the lack of conclusive evidence or the principle of logical coherence in the face of contradictory evidence. Whatever laws are known to characterize the natural order should be consulted and respected in the work of healing. But who knows enough to say with finality, "This cannot happen"? It may be contrary to known laws, and yet follow other laws not yet known. It may appear contradictory in our limited view, and yet come to higher consistency in a larger perspective than we now have. The mystery of healing is greater than our best knowledge today. It is this challenge which invites ever new discoveries in the search for health and wholeness.

# *The Freedom of the Church and the Freedom of the Citizen*

EDWIN R. SPANN

ONE OF THE CRUCIAL problems in contemporary American thought is that of the relation of Church and State. On the religious side of the issue there is confusion and conflict. For the non-Roman the problematic presents two questions. Is there a clear-cut Protestant ethic which can be applied in this period of tension? If not, what are the implications of the current forms of Roman Catholic argument? Can the American system of religious pluralism be defended consistently on the basis of Roman Catholic doctrine and practice? Does principle or expediency guide the present Roman policy in America? At a time when the prevailing point of view is secularistic, thoughtful attempts by both sides should attempt to bridge the gap between Roman and non-Roman. Both Romans and non-Romans can object to the attempt of the secularist to establish the state as an end in itself, and the correlative relegating of the Church to the level of a social organization whose chief function is that of providing a moral prop for the supremacy of the state. Through sympathetic study and action on both sides, the secularistic ethic can be opposed and the Christian ethic strengthened. For that reason it is important for Protestants to understand something of current American Roman Catholic thought.

Among the contemporary American Roman Catholics one of the most interesting and appealing figures is that of John Courtney Murray. He holds the degrees of M.A. (Boston College), S.T.D. and S.T.L. (Woodstock College), and S.T.D. (Gregorian University, Rome). Since 1936 he has been professor of theology at Woodstock College. In 1951-52, Father Murray was a visiting professor of philosophy at Yale University, and he has edited the magazine *Theological Studies* since 1941.<sup>1</sup> The chief thrust of Murray's writings has dealt with the justification of American religious pluralism on the basis of Roman Catholic tradition and doctrine.

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<sup>1</sup> For biographical material on Father Murray see *The American Catholic Who's Who: 1954 and 1955*. Walter Romig, 1955, XI, 353. Also, *The Monthly Supplement: Who's Who*, VI, 5 (May, 1955), p. 124.

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This article attempts to describe Murray's position in the hope that there will be a clarification of at least a portion of contemporary American Roman Catholic thought on the relation of church and state. It is important to remember that Murray is not representative of all Roman thought on church and state. But he is characteristic of a group who are seeking to justify the American religious pluralism by Roman principles and history.<sup>2</sup>

Father Murray sets the issue for us by objecting to a book written by John A. Ryan, *The State and the Church*, in which he feels that Ryan has stated a position of expediency as characteristic of Roman principles. Ryan states that the provisions of the American constitutional law are binding upon Catholic consciences at the present time, but that "constitutions can be changed, and non-Catholic sects may decline to such a point that the political proscription of them may become feasible and expedient." As soon as the legal repression of heresy becomes possible, it also becomes *necessary*. That, of course, is in consequence of "the principles of eternal and unchangeable truth" held by the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>3</sup>

The important point here is that Murray, as a Roman Catholic, is objecting to Ryan's thesis. For Murray, religious intolerance is not a necessary extension of the dogma that "the Catholic Church is the one true Church." In seeking to defend his thesis, Murray says that the task of the Roman Catholic theorist must not be that of adapting truth to secular standards, but that it is the determining of the content of truth itself. If the content of Catholic principles can be shown to support religious pluralism, then it will contradict Ryan's contention that civil intolerance is more or less a matter of principle for the Roman Catholic. In terms of Protestant interest, if Murray can demonstrate that a "Catholic government" is not obligated by principle to restrict heresy, as defined by itself, then the American Protestant will have no grounds to fear expediency on the part of American Roman Catholic policy today.

## I

Murray's argumentation takes two main lines. The first is theological and the second is historical. Murray seeks to describe the "Catholic ideal"

<sup>2</sup> For articles written by American Roman Catholics in opposition to Murray, refer to: (1) Francis J. Connell's brief article at the end of Murray's treatise, "Governmental Repression of Heresy," *Proceedings of the Catholic Theological Society*, Third Annual Meeting, June, 1948, pp. 99-101. (2) Rover, Dominic, "Communications: 'Religious Tolerance,'" *The Commonweal*, LIX (1953-1954), 451. For representative selections from Roman writers whose position would generally agree with Murray's thesis, see: (1) Ellis, John Tracy, "Church and State: American Catholic Tradition," *Harper's Magazine*, CCVII (November, 1953), 63-67. (2) Hartnett, Robert C., "State Toleration of Minority Religious Groups," *The Catholic Mind*, LII (July, 1954), 400-405.

<sup>3</sup> Murray, John Courtney, "Governmental Repression of Heresy," *Proceedings of the Catholic Theological Society*, Third Annual Meeting, June, 1948, p. 26.

on the theoretical basis of eternal principle. On the second level he argues that principles must be applied within historical frames of reference. Murray insists that any valid theory must include both the principle and the historical background of the application of that principle.<sup>4</sup>

Within the history of Roman Catholic thought on church and state, Murray finds two main streams: the theory of direct power and the theory of indirect power. The first is predicated upon the primacy of the spiritual power, but this primacy is interpreted in such a way as to include the temporal within the spiritual. In terms of the traditional "two swords" thinking, the Church is seen as having dominion over both the temporal and the spiritual swords. Ordinarily the Pope uses only the spiritual sword while delegating the power of the temporal sword to the prince. However, if the prince should be negligent in his application of the temporal sword, the Pope has the right and responsibility to recover the use of the temporal power for the superior interests of the Church. Thus the Church can inflict both spiritual and temporal punishment for the protection of her spiritual unity. The safeguard of that unity is her duty. As a result of its higher end, the Church, as represented by its head, the Pope, has the right to use the power of the temporal order in a direct manner in order to promote its higher destiny. In this type of thinking there is no doubt concerning the Church's right to demand that the State use its authority to suppress heresy. The Middle Ages best exemplifies the historical period in which this theory was applied.<sup>5</sup>

Even though able to describe the theory of the direct power and to admit that it does represent part of the Roman tradition, Murray is especially interested in the theory of the indirect power. Three figures are most prominent in Murray's survey of its historical development: Robert Bellarmine, John of Paris, and Pope Leo XIII.

Robert Bellarmine wrote in the context of the seventeenth century, opposing the absolutist claims of James I. For Bellarmine, the Pope had no direct temporal power but only an indirect spiritual arm which had influence in the temporal sphere. Nevertheless, by reason of his spiritual power, the Pope's power "extended" to the temporal order upon occasion. The definition of that occasion was the Church's concern for the salvation of souls. The Pope was not to dispense with kings as he might bishops, but he could upon occasion change the royal power by virtue of his spiritual authority. In the realm of laws of the state, the Pope was not to pass certain laws, for he was not a jurist, but if there were laws which prohibited the

<sup>4</sup> Murray, J. C., "Governmental Repression of Heresy," pp. 37-38.

<sup>5</sup> Murray's summary of the theory of direct power can be studied in more detail in his article, "Governmental Repression of Heresy," pp. 39-42.

work of the Church, he was free to see that they were removed. In similar manner, Bellarmine put a close connection between the indirect power of the Church and the duty of the state to repress heresy.<sup>6</sup>

In so far as Bellarmine restated the Thomistic distinction between the two powers and stressed the primacy of the spiritual, Murray feels that he contributed to the tradition of the indirect power. However, Murray demurs at the point where Bellarmine seeks to make his application. Murray says that the fact that the Church acts from the principle of the primacy of the spiritual does not negate the fact that a political effect produced in the name of a spiritual end is still a political effect. In defending the actions of the Pope, Bellarmine confused the relative and the eternal, the specific and the principle.

From Bellarmine, Murray moves to the more complex theories of John of Paris who wrote in opposition to both Philip the Fair and the hierocrats at the turn of the fourteenth century. Whereas Bellarmine represented a society in which a basic unity was assumed, John of Paris wrote in a society in which the rise of the "nation state" had destroyed this basic assumption. On one hand John of Paris opposed the absolutist claims of Philip by supporting the division of the two powers, spiritual and temporal, with the former having a higher responsibility by reason of its higher end. Yet, the spiritual was not only higher in its end, but also must, by the same token, be related to the temporal realm. On the other side, against the hierocrats who maintained that the power of the temporal order was mediated through the Pope to the prince, John of Paris argued that the power of the temporal order was grounded in creation and therefore came directly from God, not the Pope. For Murray, John of Paris' contribution was his *via media* between the assumption of the Pope who claimed dominion over both the spiritual and the temporal in such a way as to make the power of the prince contingent upon the Pope, and the assumption that the Pope had spiritual power alone and that this power had no direct influence on the temporal realm.

The most distinctive feature of John of Paris' contribution was in the realm of the relation of Church and State. For John of Paris, both powers derive their authority from God. The origin of the state lies in the creation of man's nature as a social being. The spiritual power is grounded in the fact that the good life in the temporal order is destined to a higher spiritual end beyond itself. The highest destiny of man is a supernatural destiny,

<sup>6</sup> Murray, J. C., "St. Bellarmine on the Indirect Power," *Theological Studies*, IX (December, 1948), 491 and 535. Also consult "Governmental Repression of Heresy," pp. 42-52.

and to this destiny the entire social order is related. What, then, of the relation of the two orders? The first principle is the primacy of the spiritual by virtue of its higher end. The power of the Pope is both real and spiritual. Furthermore, the means of applying this principle will be commensurate with its nature. The Pope is to be the teacher of faith and morals. As such, the Pope's actions are to be felt in the temporal order in an indirect way; he is never to be a super-prince. In so far as the prince is concerned, he is dependent upon the Pope for instruction in the area of faith and morals. In turn, this teaching has its effect in the temporal order through the action of the prince, but the implementation is to be indirect.

The influence of the spiritual order upon the temporal is centered in its influence on the individual conscience of the believer, and is not to be administered upon the temporal order in a direct manner. In questions of judgment concerning issues of justice alone, the prince is to be the sole judge; in questions of a spiritual nature, the Pope is to be the sole arbiter. The only influence that the Pope may have over the jurisdiction of the prince in his own realm comes through the instruction of the prince by the Pope in the sphere of faith and morals. This is the unique teaching of John of Paris in relation to the development of the theory of the indirect power. In his own words Father Murray says: "John of Paris therefore interprets the classic right of the Middle Ages, not in the terms of a direct authority over the princely power as such, but in terms of the Church's moral jurisdiction over the conscience."<sup>7</sup>

From the latter part of the Middle Ages, Murray skips to the latter part of the nineteenth century and the writings of Pope Leo XIII. As both Bellarmine and John of Paris had written within specific historical contexts, so Leo XIII responded to the challenges of his day. In the late eighteen hundreds, freedom had been defined by certain groups as complete autonomy, freedom from authority. To be free, it was thought, meant to be lawless and limitless. Against this type of thinking Leo XIII sought to define true freedom as that freedom which rests in true authority. For Leo XIII a society that is based on the doctrine of limitless freedom succumbs to power as the principle of social organization instead of holding a balance between authority and power.

In so far as the specific problem at hand is concerned, Leo XIII agreed with Bellarmine and John of Paris in restating the basic dyarchy of the two social powers appointed by God, the spiritual and the temporal. From

<sup>7</sup> Murray, J. C., "Contemporary Orientations of Catholic Thought on Church and State in the Light of History," *Theological Studies*, X (June, 1949), 208; hereafter referred to as "Contemporary Orientations." The material for this section on John of Paris is based on pp. 194-212 of this article.

the consideration of the appropriate ends of the two powers, there arises the primacy of the spiritual. In turn this primacy implies that the spiritual is to have jurisdiction in the temporal order over those things which are spiritual by nature. Just how this relationship is to be maintained, Murray feels that Leo XIII failed to delineate, except to insist that there should be harmony. Nevertheless, the Leonine position posits as the root of the necessity for an orderly relation of the two powers the fact that they both rule over the same individual. "If therefore there is conflict and not harmony between them, the conflict is felt in the depths of the personal conscience, which knows itself to be obligated to both of the powers which are from God. Their harmony therefore is required by the unity and integrity of the human personality."<sup>8</sup>

For Murray, the Leonine contribution lies in Leo's insistence that the starting point is the unity of the individual personality rather than the unity of the social body. With Leo XIII the matrix is the human person who is both child of God, a member of the Church, and a social being who is member of the human community, and as such is a citizen of the state. Each capacity has a set of rights which are indigenous in origin, but which must be organized into an organic whole. The principle of organization is the primacy of the spiritual nature of man, and the finality of the harmony is not social unity but *personal unity* which will guarantee the integrity of the human personality. For Bellarmine, the dual end of the one body is considered; for Leo XIII the *dual end of one man*.

Applying this new approach to the relation of Church and state, the conclusion is that the government has no part to play in calling the Church into existence. The Church is not merely another social organization based on the collective acts of human beings seeking association, but is founded in the transcendental order of God's will. Therefore, the Church must be guaranteed its freedom to fulfill its obligation. On the other hand, the essential duty of the government is directed toward the preservation of the common good in which freedom of the Church is an integral part.<sup>9</sup>

To bring the account up to date, Murray turns to the writings of Pope Pius XII and concludes that Pius is merely making explicit what had

<sup>8</sup> Murray, J. C., "Contemporary Orientations," p. 220.

<sup>9</sup> Murray's description of the contribution of Leo XIII may be found in several other works, among which are:

"Contemporary Orientations," pp. 215-224.

"Leo XIII: Two Concepts of Government," *Theological Studies*, XIV (December, 1953), 551-567.

"Leo XIII on Church and State: The General Structure of the Controversy," *Theological Studies*, XIV (March, 1953), 1-30.

"St. Bellarmine on the Indirect Power," p. 515.

been implicit in the writings of Leo XIII. Since the final unity of the dyarchy rests in the unity of the human personality, responsibility for the harmony rests on its beneficiary. The citizen who is both the foundation and the end of society is not to be a passive element in the social process, but an active agent. Through the exercise of his civic rights the individual citizen is to secure the harmony of Church and state demanded by his individual need and the common good.<sup>10</sup>

This in essence is Murray's theoretical argument. From Bellarmine, Murray takes the insistence that the spiritual and the temporal are two powers. The relationship is based on the principle that the spiritual is higher than the temporal by virtue of its supernatural end. From John of Paris, Murray takes the idea that the authority of the state is based on the creation of man as social being and therefore the power of the state is not a derived power. On the other hand, the authority of the spiritual power is real and has consequences in the temporal realm through the influence of the Church on the individual conscience. Carrying this point further still, Leo XIII changed the entire orientation by replacing the unity of society, assumed in earlier periods of Roman thinking, with the unity of the individual personality.

## II

As Father Murray has a theoretical argument, so he also has a historical argument. There can be no principles in abstraction alone. Principles which are universal and eternal must be applied to situations which are involved in the exigencies of time and change. Therefore, while the principle may not have changed, there have been changes on the level of historical application. The danger is that the relative may be confused with the eternal in such a way as to cloud the distinction between the two. The rights of the Church remain grounded in the same absolute principles, but they must be related to *a* temporal power, not to *the* temporal order.

In the Middle Ages when the temporal order demanded a social unity which could be provided only by the Church, the Church was justified in its preoccupation with the state. If the Church had not entered directly into the functions of the state in the medieval society, the social order would have been chaotic. However, with the rise of the modern state, the temporal order came to its true maturity. In rising from adolescence, the state differentiated itself from the Church as a society in its own right and with its own institutions appropriate to the direction and control of its actions. With the development of the national state the rightful autonomy of the tem-

<sup>10</sup> Murray, J. C., "Contemporary Orientations," p. 222.

poral tended to carry itself to the extreme by claiming jurisdiction over all of society including the spiritual. Indeed, the essence of the modern state for Murray is a drive for power, and the nature of power implies a monism in which the state becomes an end in itself.<sup>11</sup>

If the rise of the modern state was the social fact with which men like John of Paris had to deal, our contemporary scene is similar in that we too have a new political phenomenon in the appearance of the *democratic* state. In this new political setting the unit of power and authority is the individual democratic citizen. Therefore, the contemporary demand for orderly relation between the spiritual and the temporal spheres proceeds from the fact that both have power over the same men who are both Christians and citizens. The relationship is no longer dependent upon an institutional oneness in which the king becomes the vassal of the Pope. Nor is the relationship based on the moral influence of one man, the king, who is the representative of the nation state. If the two powers are to be related today, they must find their focus in a new context. In the modern democratic state the pivotal point for successful action of both Church and state is the principle of freedom as exercised by the individual conscience which is subject to both powers. Through the free citizen, who has freely consented to the doctrine and law of the Roman Church, the Church indirectly guides the life of the state in such a way as to aid its supernatural mission.

Father Murray attempts to bring both points of his argument to bear on the problem of American religious pluralism in a special article entitled "The Problem of Pluralism in America."<sup>12</sup> For the Roman Catholic Church to seek a new application of its principles to the American scene is neither to contradict that tradition nor to act from expediency. The Roman tradition is maintained because the new application arises from the rational imperative of the primacy of the spiritual. This is not expediency because expediency acts from power motives alone, whereas this action is based on principle. When the organization of the temporal order shifts, the specific form of application must also shift. No form other than that which has developed within the American framework of religious pluralism is applicable in the United States. Unlike its European democratic cousins, the American democracy is not a corruption of a social order that went before it, but is a unique attempt to achieve social peace. Since it is unique,

<sup>11</sup> In order to understand Murray's concept of the extent of perversion reached in the modern state, see: "On the Structure of the Church-State Problem," *The Catholic Church in World Affairs*, edited by Waldemar Gurian and M. A. Fitzsimons, University of Notre Dame Press, 1954, pp. 1-10.

<sup>12</sup> Murray, J. C., "The Problem of Pluralism in America," *Thought*, XXIX (Summer, 1954), 165-208.

America requires a new application that will be appropriate to its nature.

Behind the American proposition lies the epistemological assumption that there are objective truths which are accessible to men, and such truths can be defended in rational argument. The statement, "We hold these truths to be self-evident" is the epitome of this assumption and denies the attempt of that philosophy which views truth as made and not found. The first truth of this proposition is that society is based upon a sovereign power which transcends all temporal claims of nations and individuals. Belief in God, not in the autonomous reason of man, is the first principle of political organization within the American democratic context. In this insistence upon rule by divine law and submission to the sovereignty of God, the American democrat stands in the "natural law" tradition.

The second principle is that of the consent of the governed and the participation of the governed in the authority of power. Government is not only limited by its responsibility to law, but it is also held in check by those who are to be ruled. The American assumption at this point is not that all men are equally capable of ruling, but rather that all men can understand the broad issues of society when they are fairly presented. Upon this confidence arises the American concern for free speech and free press.<sup>13</sup>

Within this new political setting there has developed a unique *libertas civilis*. Freedom has become an essential part in the preservation of the common good. Only through the exercise of the democratic freedoms will the common good be preserved in a democracy. The guarantee of these freedoms by the democratic constitution has become a part of the definition of the democratic state itself. Nor is it politically possible to exempt the freedom of religion from the guarantee of freedoms inherent in the democratic common good without destroying that good. Speaking of any attempt to exclude religious freedom from the total concept of freedoms, Murray says:

Such an exception is not just; for it inevitably implies the violation of that political equality which all the citizens of a state may justly claim as a basic right. Such an exception is not politically possible; for . . . in a judgment confirmed by all manner of political experience, all the democratic freedoms form an organic whole. Each is a part of a system of liberty; they all are coherent . . . It is not therefore possible within this system to make exceptions without endangering the political system itself.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Murray, J. C., "Contemporary Orientations," pp. 182-183.

<sup>14</sup> Murray, J. C., "Governmental Repression of Heresy," p. 95. For a more complete discussion of Murray's attitude toward the Spanish claims, reference should be made to his "On Religious Freedom," *Theological Studies*, X (September, 1949), 426-432.

In dealing specifically with the problem of religious pluralism, Murray turns to an examination of the meaning of the First Amendment. For Murray, the rise of religious freedom in America must be seen as a piece of social legislation necessitated by the social conditions of the American scene. As social legislation the aim was that of providing peace for the common good, and, as such, religious freedom stands within the context of the Roman tradition in which the obligation of the state is the preservation of the common good. From these same principles the Spanish Catholic is justified in his prejudice as to the content of the common good for the Spanish society in its present historical setting. However, the point at hand is that the American Roman Catholic is justified in his support of religious pluralism, and that his criterion is moral because the ultimate concern is the *preservation of the common good*. The validity of both the Spanish and the American systems will depend upon the peculiar context and background of each system.

In summary fashion, Murray sees four reasons why the American Roman Catholic can give support to the First Amendment and its assumption of religious freedom. First, the Amendment makes the correct distinction between Church and state in that it recognizes the two as separate societies. To attempt to make the two powers one would violate the true nature of both the Church and the state. Secondly, the freedom of religion clause provides legal status for the Church and yet leaves the Church free to perform her spiritual duties. Thirdly, the American political experiment has passed the test of experience. Political unity has been preserved without religious unity. Lastly, American religious pluralism is justified on the basis that there has been a growth of religion itself under the American system. The First Amendment has proved that the exclusion of governmental control of religion has strengthened religious unity rather than destroying it. In other countries the Church has alternated between persecution and privilege with little assurance of continued support. Thus from the grounds of historical necessity, from the correct distinction between church and state, and from the pragmatic advantage of the Church in its growth under the freedom of religion clause, Murray justifies the support of religious pluralism in America.

This is the climax of Murray's effort. He has made the traditional distinction between the two powers with their distinctive sovereignty within their respective spheres. This distinction is supported in theory by Roman Catholic natural law and by the social fact of the growth of the modern

state. The consequence of the social fact is that religious unity is no longer necessary as the foundation for the unity of the state. In like manner, the suppression of error and religious dissent by the state in the name of protecting social unity is no longer a function of the government. However, religious unity is still to be considered a social good and for this reason the government is to protect the freedom of the Church to do its work.

The responsibility for the salvation of men's souls lies solely with the Church. The area of responsibility of the state with regard to the Church is restricted to the task of guaranteeing the full freedom required by the Church for the promotion of its spiritual duty. This protection for the Church is guaranteed in the American Constitution. Therefore, what more can the Church rightfully expect of the state other than that which is already granted by the American Constitution? Thus, the Roman can give his support to the American experiment which includes religious freedom, and the non-Roman need have no fear of Roman Catholic power threatening religious freedom in America. At least on the surface Murray seems to have provided American thought with a justification of religious freedom (or pluralism) on the basis of Roman Catholic tradition and principles.

### III

To establish a thorough criticism of Father Murray's thought would require more space than can be allowed for this article. However, there are two points which can be mentioned as guide posts for an evaluation. The first point is one of gratitude. Murray has attempted to ground the problem of Church-state relations on Christian principles rather than on either expediency or secularism. The Christian Church has a unique function in the society of men, and any attempt to subordinate that function to the order of the state both denies the proper authority of the Church and extends the limits of the state's power beyond their legitimate bounds. The Church-state problem cannot be settled adequately on any grounds other than that of religious principle. The Church is not subordinate to the state even if that state be democratic. To the extent that Murray argues for such a religious interpretation of the problem, to that extent all Christians can agree.

However, there is grave concern that Father Murray has not accomplished a true defense of religious freedom on the basis of principle. If this article has been fair to him, then Murray's whole intent is to establish the defense of American religious freedom on the grounds of Roman Catholic "natural law" tradition which maintains the central obligation of the

state to protect the common good. The key to Murray's inconsistency lies in his failure to deny the validity of the Spanish system. Rather than condemning the Spanish system, Murray insists that both the American and the Spanish positions are to be justified on the basis of their historical common good. Thus, in so far as the common good of the democratic state requires the free expression of religion, then religious pluralism is valid and necessary. This implies a historical relativism. If religious pluralism is justifiable only on the basis of historical context, what then is to prevent a redefinition of that context to exclude freedom?

With all his historical relativism, Murray remains an orthodox Roman Catholic in his doctrine of authority. Who is to judge the validity of the Spanish or the American systems? The final court of appeal is to be the Church, and this in essence means the Pope as the Head of the Church. Therefore, on the practical level, what guarantee is there for the non-Roman that what is being defended is in fact religious freedom as principle and not as political expediency? There is no guarantee that the Pope may not re-evaluate the content of the common good so as to conclude that religious freedom is no longer a part of the common good. Within the context of the future common good, the duty of the state may once again be the persecution of heretics as defined by the Church.

To accuse Father Murray of mere expediency would be unfair to his work, for there is far too much genuine effort put into his argumentation. Nevertheless, one must be aware that Murray's loyalty to the Pope as the final judge of authority on the human level makes his position basically untenable as a defense of religious freedom. So long as the Roman Catholic remains loyal to the Pope as the final authority, there can be no legitimate Roman defense of religious pluralism. Yet to deny the authority of the Pope would be to deny the essence of Roman Catholicism. Therefore, as non-Romans, we should be appreciative of the unfortunate contradiction inherent in the position of many American Roman Catholics in the twentieth century.

However, the complete task of providing an adequate basis for Church-state relations must have positive content. The basic religious orientation of all social problems must be insisted upon, and yet freedom for the working of God's grace in nongovernmental forms must also be protected. In so far as Father Murray gives a rationale for such a position he is contributing to interfaith strengthening of the Christian ethic. Yet his doctrine of the seat of authority in the hierarchy of the Church fails to satisfy non-Roman demands for guaranteed religious freedom within a democracy.

# The Character of the Earliest Christian Tradition

ALBERT E. BARNETT

ACCORDING TO TRADITION current during the closing decades of the second century, the earliest of our four Gospels was written after the deaths of Peter and Paul.<sup>1</sup> Many Christians, therefore, never saw one of these Gospels nor heard any of them read. Oral proclamation was the original method for the dissemination of the Christian message, and memory preserved the only report of Jesus' words and deeds. The needs of the churches in such practical matters as evangelism, worship, the creation and maintenance of moral standards, defense against hostile criticism, supplied the motivation for the preservation and use of these memories. These needs also determined the forms of statement with which accounts of Jesus' life and message were invested before Christian teachers began to create the written sources incorporated in our Gospels.

There are interesting allusions to a rather thoroughly conventionalized oral tradition of Jesus' life and message in 1 Cor. 11:23-25, 15:3-7, Acts 10:36-42, 20:35. The preface to Luke-Acts (Luke 1:1-4) makes tradition "handed down" by "the original eyewitnesses who became teachers of the message" the foundation of the earliest accounts of the Christian movement. Judging from these allusions and from the contents of the Gospels, early Christian preaching consisted largely of stories about Jesus and accounts of what he said.

The transition from oral tradition to written Gospels did not take place abruptly. There were many in-between steps. According to the preface of Luke-Acts, oral and written sources were used by the author of this two-volume work. Mark, Matthew, and John were similarly indebted to oral and documentary sources. Our four Gospels were built out of written and oral materials whose faith-creating value had been proven in

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<sup>1</sup> Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, III.1.1; Eusebius, *Church History*, V. 8. 3.

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such principal centers of Christian life as Antioch, Caesarea, Rome, and Ephesus. The comprehensiveness of these Gospels was the new thing about them. The materials of which they made use had long been familiar.

The data of our Gospels make it possible to identify with approximate accuracy the written sources immediately underlying them. They also afford a clear picture of the evangelists' use of these sources. The formation of a historically probable conception of the oral tradition back of these earliest written sources is a further and more difficult task.

The Fourth Gospel was in a sense the culmination of the Gospel-making process. As the latest of the canonical Gospels, it is a natural starting point for an examination of the process in its entirety. To regard it, however, as typical and as related to the earlier three Gospels in a succession whose character is exhibited in Mark, Matthew, and Luke is misleading. The Fourth Gospel does more than merely exhibit an advanced form of this succession. So to view it would suggest that all of the Gospels are historical in appearance only. The tendency would be to view them as ideal creations whereby the Church clothed its own positions with authority by attributing them to Jesus.

The men who wrote the Gospels were missionary preachers. They were not scientific biographers. Their books were forms of preaching and not history for its own sake. Each of the four was in a thoroughly real sense an exposition of the religious insights and convictions of its author as he addressed himself to the needs of people in the locality where he worked. Each evangelist might have given what he wrote the title, *What Christianity Means to Me.*<sup>2</sup> Mark, Matthew, and Luke were no different from the Fourth Gospel in this respect. All four were Gospels.

The three earlier Gospels resemble one another and differ from the Fourth Gospel, however, in that they were compilations of materials from older documents, which in their turn were crystallizations of oral tradition which had achieved a considerable degree of fixity during the two decades following the Crucifixion. These Gospels incorporated their sources. The author of the Fourth Gospel, by contrast, used but did not reproduce sources. He reflected upon materials available to him in other Gospels and oral tradition, but made practically no report of the materials themselves.

Widespread agreement exists among serious students of the New Testament that the tradition presupposed by the Gospels and their written

<sup>2</sup> Cf., Rom. 2:16; I Cor. 15:1, 2; Gal. 1:6, 9.

sources was composed of small, self-contained units. The investment of these materials with such forms as the pronouncement story, the miracle story, stories about the great turning points in Jesus' career, sayings-summaries, was the achievement of early Christian pedagogy. The selection and standardization of these materials extended throughout the two decades when Christian tradition was oral. The worth of materials for the stimulation and maintenance of faith determined their selection. The forms in which they were presented made the materials memorable. They also served to conserve accepted versions of the material.

Crucial differences of opinion become apparent in the effort to determine the origin of the tradition and the character of its primary elements. The tradition is sometimes regarded as the outgrowth of the message of the early "heralds." On this basis, the Gospels afford no certain knowledge of the career and message of Jesus. They are rather a disclosure of the history of the Christian movement, a phase of which is the growth of the Christian message. By others, the tradition is itself held to have been the content of Christian preaching. On this view, the Gospels supply a substantially historical representation of Jesus' life and message.

In the instance of the first of these two views, the basic element in the earliest Christian tradition was vision experience. Vivid reports of visions of the risen Christ and revelations received from him were the content of the first preaching. People who listened to these stories reacted to them in ways determined by their cultural backgrounds. Jewish hearers with a background of acquaintance with the Old Testament and the ethical emphases of scribal teaching responded differently from non-Jews, whose religious inheritance was from the Hellenistic cults. Preaching aimed at winning converts and supporting the faith of believers. Teaching was attributed to Jesus and stories about Jesus were created which served the needs of the developing Church. These materials were the product of immediate inspiration and represented the technique of sermon-building. They were not primarily recollections of the actual teaching and career of Jesus.

As the corollary of this view of the origin of the materials, the several "forms" into which they were cast are taken to represent successive layers of tradition. Origin in a Jewish or Hellenistic situation is discoverable in the interests reflected in a saying or story. The story of plucking grain on the Sabbath and the eschatological sayings of Mark 13 would have a Palestinian origin. Healing by exorcism, vice lists such as Mark 7:21-23 (Matt.

15:19-20), teaching regarding divorce as reported in Mark 10, would point to a Hellenistic setting. The primitive Passion Narrative, based on vision experiences of the risen Christ,<sup>3</sup> grew as additional stories were produced. It was the earliest element in the Christian tradition. All other stories and the teaching represented in sayings and parables were created by the Christian Community. They had their inspiration in faith in a Savior like Jesus, who had suffered and died on man's behalf, defeated Death, been exalted to Heaven, and would shortly return to judge the world.

The alternative and preferable view makes allowance for the adaptation of the tradition of Jesus' words and deeds to the objectives of evangelistic preaching and catechetical instruction. Matthew and Luke illustrate such adaptation in their use of Mark and their other common source "Q." Presumably, the authors of Mark, "Q," "L," and "M" exercised similar freedom in the interest of pedagogical effectiveness. There were probably checks on the extent to which adaptation could proceed unchallenged. Early opposition to the Fourth Gospel grew out of its radical handling of the Synoptic account of Jesus' life and message. The publication of the fourfold Gospel was probably designed to secure a more hospitable reception for this latest of the Gospels. Adaptation rather than outright creation, therefore, probably describes the handling of the materials of Christian tradition.

Much that Jesus said and did remained latent in Christian memory until brought forward by the stimulus of a concrete need. Christians solved their problems by appeal to the authority of Jesus' example and teaching. Memories of him survived and became elements in tradition because they proved themselves religiously useful. Tradition owed its origin and growth to the Church in the sense that selective memory determined the content of tradition.

The disproportionate space devoted to the Passion Narrative in the Gospels does not necessarily make the account of Jesus' antecedent ministry a secondary development. Jesus' death and resurrection were probably never the sole items of interest for the Church. The way Jesus lived among his contemporaries, the content of his message, the ends for which he died, the reality of his triumph over death were all elements in the Christian message from the first: Among these elements composing the earliest tradition, Jesus' words rather than the narrative of his Passion and Resurrection were oldest. Jesus not improbably himself trained his disciples to disseminate his message and created such forms as the isolated saying,

<sup>3</sup> I Cor. 15:1-9.

the sayings-group, the parable, as aids to memory. He would have had precedent for this in the normal procedure of prophet and wise man.<sup>4</sup>

The Gospels, their written sources, and the antecedent oral tradition, reflect but do not create an original interest in the entire sweep of Jesus' ministry. His first followers were active in the developing Christian movement. While the influence of first-hand testimony should not be exaggerated, it ought not to be left out of account in conceiving the origin of the materials incorporated in the documents used by the evangelists. Though relatively late, our Gospels were enlargements of earlier documents, and these earlier documents were vitally related to the earliest oral tradition. The public for whom the evangelists wrote were not wholly unacquainted with the materials presented in the Gospels, and probably demanded a presentation of these materials in forms approximating what they had customarily heard.

Jesus himself wrote nothing. He employed the oral method and the forms of expression of prophet and wise man. Like them, he surrounded himself with disciples whom he trained as assistants in extending his message. For their convenience, he gave his thought the compact and picturesque statement which made it intelligible and easily remembered. That Jesus was survived by followers who knew the substance of his message directly from him is a datum of utmost historical importance. Their knowledge and training were vitalized by the resurrection faith, but originated in earlier association with Jesus. His words possessed from the outset the authority of their intrinsic beauty and truth. Under the spell of the conviction of Jesus' victory over death, they gained the authority of the utterances of one who had been "decisively demonstrated" to be Messiah by the Resurrection and would shortly return to judge the world. Jesus' historical message thus became the criterion of God's final judgment of men.

During the two decades following the Crucifixion, Christians wrote little. They lived in the expectation of the imminent return of Jesus. Their primary concern was to proclaim the gospel as widely as time permitted. The employment of writing was part of the adaptation of missionary activity to a non-Jewish public. Had Christianity remained a movement within Palestinian Judaism, there might have been no Gospels. The earliest documents of which traces remain were composed in Greek.

There existed during this period the kind of general knowledge of the course of events of Jesus' career disclosed in Mark, but there was little interest in the preservation of an accurate sequence of biographical data.

<sup>4</sup> Easton, B. S., "The First Evangelic Tradition," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 50 (1931), pp. 148-155; Goodspeed, E. J., *Formation of the New Testament*, University of Chicago Press, 1926, p. 33.

The chief interest of Christians was in Jesus' message. The lack of a genuinely biographical interest during this early period would have denied our evangelists the data for real biography, even had biography by then become a vital concern. Memories of Jesus were the materials of the type of preaching which preserved and formulated our Gospel sources. The forms which proved to be most serviceable were the self-contained story, parables, and groups of sayings. Preachers and teachers who gave these materials fixity of form and arrangement were relatively close to the original facts. There was vital continuity between them and those who possessed first-hand information.

Toward the close of the first two decades of Christian history, blocks of materials, both sequences of narratives and groupings of sayings and parables, may have been reduced to writing. Repetition in preaching and catechetical instruction had already established a certain fixity in the forms in which the materials were known. Versions of individual units and collections of such units of materials probably developed in important centers like Antioch, Caesarea, Rome, Ephesus and these tended to reduce miscellaneousness to a minimum. Variety, however, was not wholly lost, as is evidenced by differences between narrative traditions reflected in Mark and Luke, and in the accounts of the teaching in Matthew and Luke.

Between A.D. 50 and 65, the written sources on which the Synoptic writers drew were compiled. This was also the period to which Paul's letters belonged. The different interests illustrated by Paul and the authors of such sources as Q, L, and M are sufficient warning against the fallacy of supposing that vision experience was the original element in Christian tradition. At about the time that Paul wrote Galatians at Syrian Antioch, other leaders in the Antiochene church were emphasizing the view of Christianity represented in the Q account of Jesus' message. The organization of materials, largely discourse, under elaborate subject groupings which exceeded the Passion Narrative in length, and the reduction of such materials to writing in Greek was the outstanding development of this period. The preponderantly discourse character of Q, L, and M indicates a predominant interest in Jesus' teaching. This emphasis on the importance of what Jesus *said* largely explains the scarcity of stories about Jesus during the next several decades when Mark, Matthew, and Luke-Acts were written. The definition and enforcement of a pattern of life, distinctively Christian, appears to have been the interest served by the emphasis on Jesus' message.

# The First Christian Historian

MARTIN DIBELIUS

## I

AMONG THE WRITINGS of the New Testament one book occupies a special place, a fact which often receives too little attention. This is the Book of Acts, which tradition attributes to Luke, the author of the third Gospel; there are some things to be said against this tradition, but far more in favor of it, so that we may call the author by the name of Luke. Luke begins both writings, the Gospel as well as Acts, with a literary dedication to one Theophilus, who is evidently a distinguished person; on each occasion we have to note not only the fact of the dedication as a sign of conscious literary intention but also the style of these dedications. The choice of words and the construction of sentences at the beginning of the Gospel betray the educated author; the text of this dedication does not, however, betray the Christian at all, but sounds like the prologue to a secular book. It is somewhat different in the case of the Acts, in so far as its prologue at least mentions Jesus' name. There we read: "I have given the first account, dear Theophilus, of all that Jesus began to do and to teach until the day when he was received up"; but this reference to the preceding book, the Gospel, corresponds entirely with literary custom.

And if the continuation of the text also disappoints us in that Luke proceeds straight from this apostrophe to Theophilus to the story, we can still see that the account of this first chapter has been consciously fashioned and fitted together out of a perhaps older narrative, which contained an account of the ascension of Christ, a list of the twelve disciples, and an account of a gathering of the community, in which was included a speech by Peter. Even in this passage we are given an impression, which is constantly reaffirmed throughout the whole book, that accounts are found in Acts which could not possibly be contained in any Gospel. Thus there is an essential difference between the literary type of the Gospel on the one hand

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and that of Acts on the other—it exists although the evangelist Luke is also the author of Acts.

How is this to be explained? In writing his Gospel Luke wanted, as his foreword says, by telling Theophilus of the "things which happened amongst us," to convince a distinguished man of the truth of the Christian doctrines, with which he was already acquainted; but he achieved this by following the same principle as the other evangelists, that of recording a succession of traditional stories, allegories, and sayings in order to form a consecutive narrative. Luke, however, linked these fragments together more skillfully, gave them a somewhat richer style, and elaborated them rather more critically. It is this last factor which betrays the author who wishes to write history rather than to relate stories. Even so, in spite of these small corrections made in the Gospel in the interests of history, he still cannot be said to have entered the field of "great" literature.

He does so, however, with the Acts of the Apostles. His capabilities and inclination can this time be employed in a different way, because he has to write here without predecessors, sometimes probably even without literary sources, and to see how to make a consecutive account of what he knows and what he can discover. The *new style* is conditioned by the *new task*.

And what a task it was! A band of people had been gathered together in a common belief in Jesus Christ and in the expectation of his coming again, and were leading a quiet and, in the Jewish sense, "pious" existence in Jerusalem. It was a modest existence, and nothing but the victorious conviction of the believers betrayed the fact that from this company a movement would go out which was to change the world, that this community was to become the center of the Church. There were known to have been a few incidents which had aroused a stir, such as conversions, healings, the first martyrdom. The community probably preserved in the form of short stories such things as were a perpetual reminder to them of the reason for their existence. Thus they had, for about a generation, kept faithfully any information about the life of their Lord and Master. Only there was a difference in the amount of material available; far more material had been preserved about the life of Jesus than about the experiences of the early community.

The first seven or eight chapters of Acts show that comparatively little was preserved and handed down on the latter subject. We have only the stories of the Ascension and the Whitsun miracle, the healing of the lame

man at the gate of the temple, the death of Ananias and his wife by means of a sort of curse by Peter, and finally the martyrdom of Stephen—that is, five stories. And further, the book is called by its Greek title, "Acts of the Apostles," but how few such acts (apart from Peter) it can report! The succeeding chapters (8-12) again contain only five stories, the conversion of a distinguished Ethiopian by Philip and the conversion of the centurion Cornelius by Peter, two miracles of healing done by Peter, and Peter's miraculous release from prison. But what is told in the second half of the book, from Chapter 13 onwards, is concerned almost exclusively with the deeds and experiences of Paul, who was, indeed, the most successful apostle, although not a direct disciple of Jesus.

As we hear nothing more of the deeds of the disciples of Jesus, a host of difficult problems results: Did these disciples also evangelize, and if so, where? Did Peter die in Rome, and how long was he there? Did John, the Galilean fisherman, suffer a martyr's death in Palestine, or is he the same John who appeared suddenly in Ephesus toward the end of the century? These are all questions which can receive many different answers if we study the whole of the ancient tradition of the Church, but which cannot be answered at all out of the Acts of the Apostles. There were evidently some subjects on which Luke had no information and others about which he did not *wish* to write. With this surmise we approach the real object of our examination, the individuality of the book from the literary point of view. It is this which entitles us to call the author the first Christian historian.

## II

The historian's art is not limited to collecting and framing traditions, however many he may have at his disposal. He must endeavor to illuminate and somehow to present the meaning of events. He must be impelled by a desire to know and to understand. If Luke had had more traditions at his disposal, but had linked them together only as he does in the Gospel, he would not qualify for the title "historian." We ascribe this title to him only because he did more than collect traditions. He tried to combine in his own way, into a significant, continuous whole, both the tradition current in the community and what he himself discovered. Secondly, he tried to make clear the meaning which these events contained. Both this continuous whole and its meaning we must now consider.

The establishment of a continuity was simplest in the second part of Acts (Chapters 13-21), which deals with Paul's missionary journeys, for

here Luke evidently had an account of the stations before him. For practical reasons an account of this kind would have been used on such journeys, in order that, if the journey were to be repeated, the way and former hosts could be found once more. That Luke used such a source is clear from the fact that he also mentions unimportant stations on the journey, of which there is really nothing further to tell. The following sentence serves as an illustration: "But we went on ahead by boat to Assos, intending there to collect Paul, for he had arranged to go on foot himself. When he met us in Assos, however, we took him on board and continued to Mytilene" (Acts 20:13, 14). The content of this sentence was neither conceived in legend nor handed down as an anecdote; it can only be understood as a note taken from a list of stations, from an itinerary.

It seems to me to be a mistake, however, to conclude that because, as we have seen, there was a source for Paul's journeys, there was, similarly, a source for the first part of Acts (Chapters 1-12). If there had been a source for these chapters, giving a continuing portrayal of the development of the early Christian community and of the first missionary activities of the disciples, we should, in this first part of Acts as well as in the second, receive some rough idea of the course and duration of events. But that is not at all the case. For whereas in the second part we always hear something of the chronology of Paul's mission, in the first part we hear so little concerning the duration of the events described that we cannot tell whether months or years (two, three, or five years) intervened between the death of Christ and the conversion of Paul. The text of Acts gives us no indication. Whatever sequence is to be seen in the events has not been derived from any source, but was evidently arrived at by Luke himself; when we consider how little information was passed on to him, the achievement appears by no means small.

Let us take one example: to the story of the martyrdom of Stephen, which Luke adopted and elaborated, he added two sentences. These tell how the young man Saul (the Jewish name for Paul) was present at the stoning of Stephen and approved of his death. And between the stories of the missionary activities of Philip and those of Peter, the author places one more conversion, the story of the conversion of this same Saul at Damascus. By what is promised to Saul, or Paul, in this story the reader, who has known Paul since the death of Stephen, is prepared for this man's becoming, as we read, "a chosen vessel" to "carry the name of the Lord before nations and kings and the children of Israel" (9:15). Thus the

second part of the book, which deals with Paul's journeys, is anchored in the stories of the first part.

Another means of establishing a continuity is offered by the so-called narrative-summaries which are to be found throughout the first part of Acts. In order to understand them, we must appreciate that Luke, in writing a history of the early community, had no material of a truly "historical" kind. There were those stories of a popular type, which have already been mentioned, stories such as one could only expect to find among "unlearned and ignorant people" (4:13), but they were about individual cases; most of them showed how God helps individual Christians, protects them in danger, affords results to their preaching and miraculous power to their words. This material did not constitute history. It did not touch such subjects as the growth of the community, its inner development, its discords, and the full extent of community life. This deficiency is supplied by the narrative-summaries; these are little cross-sections of a general nature which, for the very reason that they are of this type, must have originated with Luke. Popular tradition dealt only with what was individual. What is general, or typical, is described in this way only by one who is looking at the situation as a whole, by a writer who sees history or pattern behind the events.

In connection with this, we must constantly bear in mind the principle with which the new type of research into early Christian tradition, the so-called *Formgeschichte* view, begins. The principle is that, since the early Christian tradition is neither learned nor literary, we have to imagine as its origin not a biography of Jesus or a chronicle of the community, but small units, the individual saying, or the story which is complete in itself. Anyone combining such elements into a whole, as Luke did, was forming a mosaic, and had to fill in any gaps which were left between the stones of the mosaic. In Acts, the narrative-summaries serve that purpose. Before Luke records the martyrdom of Stephen we read: "And the word of God increased, the number of disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem and a large number of priests turned to the faith" (6:7), or, after the conversion of Paul (9:31): "The church now had peace in Judea, Galilee, and Samaria; it was built up, lived in the fear of the Lord, and was filled with the comfort of the Holy Spirit." In this way individual stories found in tradition were elaborated to become descriptions of situations.

This distinction between individual elements of tradition and the narrative-summaries is important in our attempt to solve what is a contro-

versial historical problem, the question of early Christian communism. We read in Acts 2:44: "But all those who believed remained together and had everything in common; and they sold their possessions and goods and divided them among everyone according as each had need." Similarly we are told in Acts 4:34f.: "but there were no needy people among them, for all who possessed lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of the sale and laid them at the apostles' feet and each received according to his need."

This sounds like organized communism, which requires that every property-owner shall give up his possessions; but both passages are in a narrative-summary, and the function of the narrative-summaries is, as we have seen, to make general statements. In the story relating to this subject, however, we are told that Ananias kept back part of the proceeds, and that he was reproached on the grounds that he should have brought all the money or none at all, since the surrender of goods was voluntary. And when, a little earlier in the text, Barnabas is praised for putting the proceeds of the sale of his field at the apostles' disposal, we can see that he did so of his own free will and not in accordance with some rule which was binding for all.

In the early community, there was thus, evidently, free and voluntary "communism out of love" (to quote Ernst Troeltsch), but Luke used the individual instances he knew of in order to compose a picture of an ideal, an ideal such as constantly appears in Greek literature since Plato. Hans von Schubert has sketched the history of this ideal in his studies on the communism of the Anabaptists. In assessing the circumstances of early Christianity, we must keep to the principle that individual elements of tradition, such as the story of Ananias and the note about Barnabas, are older tradition and therefore more reliable than what the author added, namely the narrative-summary. We come to realize something which is almost a paradox, and which is repeatedly confirmed in Acts, that just where Luke wants to work as a historian and just where we admire what he has achieved on completely new ground, he very often begins to diverge from the old tradition. Therefore, when contradictions arise, he must, if judged by the standards of historical criticism, be considered a reporter of only secondary rank. Even in this capacity, he has much to say to us as a well-informed critic, but it is not so much his knowledge which deserves our admiration as his ability, we might say, to trace on a vacant space a clear and typical image of the earliest communities or of Paul's mission, and the

way in which he supplies connecting links and introduces connecting passages, in short, turns stories into a history.

### III

Besides producing a consecutive narrative, an author must also endeavor to interpret events if he is to be a historian. He must work out the meaning of what has taken place. And this Luke has done.

One example may make this clear. As Paul starts out for the second time from Antioch in Syria upon a missionary journey, he first visits the towns in the south of Asia Minor which have already been evangelized. Then we are told that he has been prevented by the Holy Ghost from going to the west coast of Asia Minor (that is, along the great road through the valley of the Lyke into the Greek towns of Ephesus, Smyrna, and Pergamum in Asia Minor). He goes therefore with his companions through Phrygia and the province of Galatia and wishes to reach the north coast of Asia Minor, Bithynia. Again we read, "The Holy Spirit forbade it." Thus the only way remaining open to them was to go in a northwesterly direction through Mysia to Troas. And here follows a third divine intervention: in a vision in the night, Paul sees a man from Macedonia, who says, "Come over into Macedonia and help us!" (16:9)

This is a strange way to write history. We are not told how the interventions by the Spirit were manifested, nor whether Paul evangelized in Galatia on the way. We read no names of stations or of persons. The type of information which, in other parts of the book, Luke has taken from the itinerary, is missing here: was it the source which failed? Did Luke have no records at all for this part of the journey?

It is very improbable that the author's silence is due to failure of the source, for Luke is not really silent at all. He still reports on the strange coming and going of the missionaries in the provinces of Asia Minor; if he knew the names of the provinces, he must have known the names of the places as well. In describing the zigzag course of the missionaries his object is not to narrate the changing fortunes of the mission to the towns of Asia Minor. In this section (16:6-10) the sole aim of his narrative is to show how three times divine intervention caused the mission to make a wide detour through Macedonia and Greece. It does not matter, in respect of these instructions, whether it was a case of visions or persecutions, floods, damage to roads, or other hindrances to travel; the important thing is simply that divine power guides the steps of the apostle. If we recognize

this as the meaning which Luke sees in the events and wishes to express here, we shall be left in no doubt that he intentionally omitted in this passage the names and notes contained in the itinerary of stations.

He attaches great importance to the fact that Paul reaches Greece, for it is the winning of Greece rather than the missionary journey into Asia Minor which is the beginning of the mission to the world. To him, the most important station is Athens, and the picture of Paul speaking to Greek philosophers on the Areopagus is one on which he lingers with special devotion. He is deeply conscious of the significance of the occasion when the man who, to the Greeks, was simply an uneducated Oriental, proclaims to Epicureans and Stoicks the Lord Jesus Christ and the impending judgment of the world; the occasion marks the first momentous encounter of Christian belief with classical culture.

But there are also one or two critical observations to be made with regard to this magnificent composition. In the first place, the sermon in Athens has only symbolical significance. According to the accounts given by Luke (17:34, evidently out of the itinerary), this sermon had little success; it probably did not result even in the founding of a community. Corinth was, to a far greater extent, the real center of Paul's mission in Greece. Secondly, the speech itself, the famous Areopagus speech, does not conform at all to the theology of Paul. In connection with the altar to the unknown god, it attributes to the Gentiles a far greater knowledge of God than Paul allowed to himself; it speaks also of God's relationship with man in his natural state (in connection with a quotation from Aratus) far more positively than Paul, who held a very realistic view of man's nature, would ever have spoken. Quite obviously, Luke composed this Areopagus speech himself, a conclusion which will not be surprising to anyone who is familiar with the custom of Greek historians of illuminating events by means of speeches.

But Luke also wrote the major part of the introductory scene; at least, the expressive calls from the circle of hearers, "What does this hunter of catchwords really mean?" and "He seems to be introducing strange gods" (17:18), cannot have been taken from an itinerary. Similarly, the cultural-historical observation about the Athenians, that they are continually looking for something new, is attributable to the author, who, here, in Eduard Norden's opinion, has composed the most Attic passage of the New Testament. Once more we experience that paradox which is found in the work of Luke as historian: that although criticism may lead us to question the

reliability of the speech, it confirms how surely Luke has portrayed the meaningfulness of the occasion in this very speech.

Another example illustrating the author's literary method of working out the significance, for the life of the community, of an individual incident is the case of the centurion Cornelius in Caesarea. His conversion by the apostle Peter and the confirmation of it by a manifestation of the Holy Spirit was already familiar to Luke from the tradition of the community. In reproducing it he elaborated the story in the most striking manner, at the beginning adding a vision seen by Peter, in the middle inserting a speech made by the apostle, and at the end adding the story of how Peter gave account of himself to the authorities in Jerusalem. And even this is not enough, for when the apostles meet later in Jerusalem for that discussion to which the name "Apostolic Council" has been given, both the speakers, Peter and James alike, do not speak on the real subject under discussion—keeping to Jewish circumcision—but refer to the conversion of Cornelius and God's willingness to accept the Gentiles, as it was manifested in this conversion.

Why does Luke attribute so much significance to this story? In tradition, and indeed in fact also, it was simply the story of the conversion of a so-called "God-fearing Gentile," the conversion of an uninitiated visitor to the synagogue, who was thus, in any case, not far from the religion of the Bible. There are much more striking conversions in the history of Christianity, but what makes this conversion of Cornelius so important in the eyes of the author of Acts is the fact of its being the means by which Peter, the first of the apostles, is reconciled to the evangelizing of the Gentiles. The fact that, in the Apostolic council, Peter also becomes an advocate of the policy of carrying the gospel to the Gentiles, is of very great importance for the structure of the whole book. We are not to be allowed to think, as we might if the events were given only a superficial treatment, that it was Paul who had the idea of evangelizing the Gentiles. Peter arrived at the same conviction quite independently; Luke wants to show this in the story of Cornelius. In fact, it was not men at all who conceived the idea of evangelizing the nations of the world; the reader sees in Paul's strange zigzag course that it is God himself, or, as Luke says, the Spirit, who sends the missionaries to Macedonia and Greece.

Here again, modern historical criticism cannot concede this equivalence of Peter and Paul. We must note what Paul himself wrote in his Epistle to the Galatians about Peter's timid reserve when confronted with fellow

Christians from the Gentile world; or about the allocation to the apostles of various areas, in which a mission to the Jews only is assigned to Peter, but to Paul a mission to the Gentiles. This all suggests a considerable disparity between the apostles. But Luke wants to show that the course of the Christian mission was not in the last resort determined by any one apostle, such as Paul, or by men at all, but by a supra-human power. He can do this the more easily by following the practice of historians of antiquity, who did not aim at all at portraying the personal characteristics and special activities of their heroes, but who were more commonly concerned with what was *typical* and *general* and *ideal*. Thus in both the apostles, Paul and Peter, we are intended to recognize the type of the Christian missionary.

Since the so-called Tübingen School of Ferdinand Christian Baur, which was also represented with distinction in my professorial chair by Carl Holsten (1876-97), we have been accustomed to see in these resemblances in the depicting of Peter and Paul in Acts attempts to smooth out the difference between rival parties: for example, each of the two apostles is exalted by means of his awakening someone from the dead, by his overcoming a false prophet, and by his being released from prison in a miraculous manner. Actually, however, we can see from an analysis of these "pairs" of stories that each has a completely different point. In the story about Peter's imprisonment, the miracle of his release is the main point; in the corresponding story about Paul, the point is the winning over of the prison guard. The false prophets, Simon Magus and Elymas, possess no points of contact at all. Similarity between Peter and Paul appears just as clearly when Paul makes a speech in a synagogue in Asia Minor which is identical in construction with the speeches of Peter in the first part of Acts. Here there can be no question of attempting to standardize the characters involved, for in that case, Paul would have to make several such speeches in order to be the equivalent of Peter. The author's sole concern is to introduce a typical sermon, to show how the gospel was preached in the Christian community or how, in his opinion, it ought to be preached.

#### IV

In this way we can clearly see a concern of this author which extends beyond that of the literary historian. We have already observed that the technique of this historian enables him to dispense with the details of the sequence of events; that he leaves out some stations in order that it may

the more clearly be seen that God is the real controller of the missionary journey; that he adds the narrative summaries in order to describe the development of the community, or rather, of an ideal community, and that he exalts the conversion of Cornelius to such significance that he can use it to prove the divine, rather than human, origin of the mission to the Gentiles.

Now we can understand why the speeches of Peter in Chapters 2, 3, and 10 sound so similar to those of Paul in Chapter 13. These, like most of the speeches in Acts, drawn up by the author either on the basis of accounts he possessed or independently without such accounts, are intended not for the audience who actually heard them but for the readers. The readers are to hear what is preached, and what is believed, and it is therefore not surprising that Luke obviously uses ancient Christological formulae such as "servant of God" and, to a certain extent, a classical Christology. The whole work aims not so much at letting the readers know what really happened as at helping them to understand what all this means, this invasion of the world of Hellenistic culture by the Christian Church, but particularly they are to recognize and cherish the gospel itself and the success it achieves among mankind. We can see that this point of view has also played a part in the selecting and stylizing of individual stories. Gentiles in Lystra regard the apostles as gods, the apostles reject this and thereby endanger their lives. When the doors of the prison in Philippi open as the result of an earthquake, the Gentile guard thinks the prisoners have escaped, and is confounded when he finds that the apostles have remained in prison praising God.

While every reader here feels that the specific powers of the Christian faith are stirringly expressed in these stories, this particular type of portrayal seems to be entirely absent from the final chapters of Acts (22-28). Here quite a number of hearings and defenses of the apostle are reported, and finally the adventures of his voyage to Rome, but Luke is evidently not concerned with introducing the reader to the legal situation and the trial of Paul. Indeed, he has not portrayed the full course of these proceedings and, in particular, has not reported the outcome. What he is concerned with is to express, clearly and repeatedly, the themes of Christian preaching. The mission to the Gentiles is a divine, rather than human, activity, and it is in the Christian message that Jewish hopes find fulfillment; this is shown in these speeches and trials particularly by the belief in the resurrection. These are ideas which enjoyed a special hearing in Luke's day, in the decades when the Church was visibly detaching herself from

Judaism. In these chapters, then, Luke wishes to present first of all not what has taken place but what is taking place.

We must now look from the same point of view at a section of Acts which, at first sight, appears to be completely secular and purely literary, the great description of the voyage to Rome in Chapter 27. This portrays Paul in an almost romantic manner, as the companion who utters timely warnings, as a valiant comforter and a discerning helper; but the essential part of this account is that which affords a detailed description of the voyage and the shipwreck. In this section the notes on Paul are added with some awkwardness and difficulty. The nautical correctness of this part shows clearly that Luke (never more a literary man than he is here) did not work without models. But why the nautical details which so little concern the apostle? Why the vast scale of the narrative of the voyage which all these details produce? Luke did not embellish this chapter so richly in order to attain literary distinction.

We are reminded of another passage in his work which had an obviously literary quality—his characterization of the Athenians prior to the Areopagus speech; this served to emphasize a symbolically important scene, the encounter of the gospel with the Greek spirit. As he now undertakes this journey, Paul, the real apostle to the nations, is on his way to the metropolis of the Empire. But Luke cannot allow him now, as he did in the scene on the Areopagus, to enter the forum as a speaker, for Paul is making the journey as a prisoner; he does, however, emphasize the significance of the story of the voyage by adding nautical details and so giving prominence to the story as such. Thus he shows at the end of his book that the promise by Jesus in the first chapter has been fulfilled: "You shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in the whole of Judaea and Samaria, to the ends of the earth." So we see Luke once more as a historian who expounds the meaning of an event by striking description; we see him also in his capacity as *herald* and *evangelist*, a role which he fulfills completely in his first book and wishes ultimately to fulfill also in Acts; in his capacity as a historian he finds abundant opportunities of doing so.

Who, then, was this author? It is well known in the tradition of the Church that the author of the Gospel and of Acts was called Luke and was identical with that "beloved" doctor who is mentioned several times in Paul's epistles; ever since the addition of the ancient prologues to the Gospels in the second century there has been available also the information that he came originally from Antioch in Syria. But this tradition

of the Church concerning the Gospels probably first arose at a time when the larger communities were beginning to possess several gospel-books side by side. Originally each community possessed only one, and that was the "Gospel of Jesus Christ"—and no author's name was mentioned in connection with it. Then, when the different gospel-books had to be named in order to distinguish them from one another, it may be that authors' names were derived from the places from which, according to the tradition of the Church, the books concerned had originally come, without any critical investigation being made as to whether the man who was known and named as the author had really written the book. Thus there is some justification, based on critical research, for doubts about the authorship of Matthew and Mark.

If, in contrast to many, I devote no space to such doubts in Luke's case, I feel justified in so doing, since I have taken into account the quite different literary circumstances out of which both these books, the Gospel and the Acts, came into existence. Both are dedicated to Theophilus, and indeed in a quite usual way; in the Gospel, especially, we might even call it a secular style of dedication. Therefore, we can conclude with complete certainty that both these writings were intended, not only for the Christian communities, but also for the book market. The fact and nature of the dedications meant scarcely anything to the Christian communities of about A.D. 90. They were intended for people who knew and respected literary customs. Had the author written the dedications for Christians, he would have said something about the importance for salvation of the "things which have happened amongst us" (Luke 1:1) or of "what Jesus has done and taught us from the beginning." As this is not the case, the books evidently also had other readers. Perhaps the Theophilus who is addressed was himself one of them and, as addressee of the dedication, had to attend to the distribution of the two writings. They probably also had parallel titles (perhaps "Acts of Jesus" and "Acts of the Apostles"), for the designation "gospel" meant nothing on the book market. It goes almost without saying that the author's name was included. It would have been strange indeed if the person to whom the book was dedicated had been named, but not the dedicator. The title would then perhaps have been "Luke the Antiochan's Acts of the Apostles." As the Church now began to describe her writings by the name of their authors, there was no need to search for long in the case of the books concerned here, for the name had already been

given to the other "edition." This was the name of Luke, the Antiochan doctor who had sometimes accompanied the apostle Paul.

Now it is quite in accordance with this that, in the accounts in Acts of the short journey from Troas to Philippi and, years later, again from Philippi to Jerusalem, the third person plural, the "they" of the narrative, becomes a "we." The narrator indicates in this way that he himself took part. The old view was that a special source becomes evident in these passages, the so-called "we-account," the work of an eye-witness. This view is discredited by the very fact that even the story of the voyage in Chapter 27, that is to say, that passage which, more than any other, is "literature" rather than mere recording, is written from beginning to end in the "we-style." Besides, we can see quite clearly from the accounts about Paul's missionary journeys that the "they-passages" and the "we-passages" are very similar in vocabulary and style, so similar in fact that we have no justification for attributing them to different authors. We may rather suppose, as is most probably the case with the sea-voyage, that, from the first, the author introduced his "we" into an account which he had, in order to indicate when he was present. The "we" would then be, not as was once thought, an original element, but an addition. The resulting inconsistency in the account, sometimes "they," sometimes "we," appears also in other ancient narratives.

This whole view is completely opposed to the one which was known to the generation of our teachers (with the exception of Harnack) as the "critical" view. They did not tire of telling us that the Acts of the Apostles could not have been written by Luke, Paul's companion, because it contained more errors than could have been made by one who was so close to Paul. This theory somewhat exaggerates both the proximity to Paul and the number of errors. We know, however, that the ancient historian does not wish to present life with photographic accuracy, but rather to portray and illuminate what is typical, and this practice of aiming at what is typical and important allows the author of Acts partly to omit, change, or generalize what really occurred. So it is that, where he sometimes appears to us today to be idealizing and describing what was typical, he was really trying to discharge his obligations as a historian. Thus, through the literary methods of the historian, he was able to discharge his other obligation of being a preacher of faith in Christ.

# Toward Some Fresh Understandings for Christian Education

IRIS V. CULLY

CONTEMPORARY BIBLICAL INQUIRY has been putting new emphasis on the importance of a basic *proclamation* underlying preaching in apostolic times. This was the announcement of what God had done for his people in sending Jesus, the promised One, who by his life, death, and resurrection brings eternal life to those who repent of their sins and believe in him, and who ushers in the reign of God among men.

Many forms of teaching arose from this primary message. The sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper are representations in action of the death, resurrection, and continuing presence of the Lord. The confessions of faith explain the proclamation. The development of doctrine and theological inquiry are further efforts of understanding. Evangelistic preaching has been the announcement of the good news to those who had not heard it. The apologetic task is an effort to explain the Christian faith to those who might be inimical to it. The teaching has always found a most vital expression through the lives of Christians who witnessed to the power of the gospel through their personal ability to show love in action, and to face death with assurance. Further, the teaching has been made known to fellow Christians through symbols, paintings, hymns, poetry, homilies, and exhortations.

This raises the question as to how rich an understanding can be made available for Christian nurture today. Some of the writing in current curriculum material causes concern at this point. There sometimes appears to be an emphasis on developing "ideas" about God and right conceptions of God, indicative of a predominantly intellectual approach. This could tend to ignore the fact that the deepest understanding of personalities comes first through relationship. In so far as teachers are encouraged to help children in their relationship to the living God, there need be less concern expressed about the development of ideas. Along similar lines is the

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understanding of belief as proposition or confession. Many denominations have viewed it as the former and have either indoctrinated ideas or ignored the historic statements of faith. The result is a generation of adults who cannot join with others to repeat anything except the Lord's prayer. They literally have no words with which to express themselves as a community, for not even the modern forms of confessions have been taught them.

The word "experience" has sometimes been narrowed to mean action or activity. That is why the word "existential" seems to denote a broader understanding. "Existential" involves the whole person in his situation and the past in which he is rooted. This involves how a person feels as well as how he acts and what he thinks. With such broadened meaning for experience, it may be seen that the basic Christian message can speak to the needs of a child. Every child feels rejected and alone sometimes. He tells himself that nobody loves him. He does not feel at home anywhere. Every child knows when he has done something which has turned against him those whose good will is essential to his peace. Every child, therefore, needs to know what the gospel says, that God can be seen as a Person, Jesus; that he knows us, loves us, forgives us, and helps us. In current psychological phraseology, God accepts us and is the source of our security because we can know that we always belong to him. The basic needs are the same for the child as for the adult, although the scientific expressions of the need differ.<sup>1</sup>

With this background, it may be asked how an understanding of the wholeness of teaching can broaden the scope of the work of religious education.

#### THE TEACHING ABOUT JESUS

The basic proclamation, described earlier, should be normative for the teaching of the life of Jesus to children. There is an emphasis on his rootage in Israel, his historic life, the purposes for which God sent him, and his continuing work among men. This is the only way in which the difficulties involved in unlearning from childhood and relearning for adulthood can be avoided. When the kindergarten child is too young to comprehend parts of the story, the information which comes to him through his church school experience should be such as to prepare him for later learning.

The Gospel records indicate that the birth of Jesus became a wonderful event to his first followers. If we retell the story in such a way as to make it of no more importance than the arrival of Johnny Smith's new sister

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Jersild, Arthur T. *In Search of Self: An exploration of the role of the school in promoting self-understanding*, New York, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1952.

(who might, of course, become President of the United States), we have misrepresented the intent of those who first knew Jesus. We are not here concerned with the *what* but the *how* of the narration. A perusal of stories about Jesus being currently used indicate that they have been written from a point of view which makes them hero stories. The Gospel writers, however, see his life as showing God's action. Jesus is not a second God, much less a demigod in the Greek manner. "God was in Christ," as is shown by such narratives as the healing of the paralytic ("Who can forgive sins except God?"), or the experience of the disciples from Emmaus ("Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked with us?").

A good work has been done in helping even little children to apprehend the creative activity of God, especially as seen in the world. The need now is to fill out the picture by finding ways of making real his *re*-creative activity, in terms of his saving help of which every person, young and old, stands in need. This is what Jesus' whole life showed. This is the work which God is doing now by his Holy Spirit, who interprets his work and gives the power to live in fellowship with him.

One day a group of children's writers and editors was facing the question, "What shall we teach about Easter?" It was agreed that Easter is the celebration of the Resurrection and not a nature festival heralding the arrival of spring. Then the question was broken down: What shall be taught to Kindergarten children, to Primaries, to Juniors? Immediately there occurred good reasons why each age was too young to hear the story.

Granted that much might be outside the experiences or needs of kindergarten children, what these writers failed to face was the task of laying a foundation which would help children to comprehend the power of the Resurrection later. The background for Easter is the historical event of Passover and has nothing to do with the spring. It does not even occur in spring for half the world. The responsibility is to make Easter for children synonymous with a joyful experience of remembrance of Jesus. But instead the curriculum under consideration had been carrying the suggestion that teachers bring budded branches and encourage children to draw pictures of beautiful sights outdoors. The question was: is the teaching consistent with the basic message?

#### TEACHING THROUGH SACRAMENT

There is need to rethink the whole area of the child's participation in the worship of the church. Many voices are being raised in support of

having small children attend the Sunday service of worship. Children vary. So do mothers. So do church services. Nervous mothers of children who cannot sit still, in churches where the congregation remains passive, have cause for trepidation. This question will see much discussion and experimentation during the next few years. The degree to which the child of contemporary American habits can find church attendance meaningful will be largely in proportion to the degree of congregational participation in the service through hymns, unison prayers, and responses.

The Episcopalians are emphasizing attendance of children at Holy Communion. Since the service is one of action and drama in which something is always happening, this may be a fruitful venture where the child has been prepared to understand and where he can be with a person who is devout and relaxed. The whole question of the full participation of the child in this central act of worship of the Christian church has hardly been faced by any denomination. Teachers have often suggested that children be absent on such Sundays because of the "symbolic" nature of the event, in spite of the stress on the visual approach in church school teaching. Only from country churches do young adults recall having witnessed this from childhood.

To the first Christians, this participation in the Lord's Supper was not only a memorial, but a continuation of the meals they had shared with their Lord when he was with them in the flesh. The mood of a congregation during this service is so intent as to suggest that one is not fully involved in Christian worship until he has shared in this event. Perhaps the children are being left out.

#### TEACHING THROUGH CONFESSIONS

The place of the confession of faith also needs reconsideration. If one is very clear that a living faith precedes a verbal formulation of faith, the fact remains that people need words in which to declare their loyalty. Many Protestant young people today have said that others could explain what their faith meant but they could not. Two things need to be separated here: (1) the simple affirmation; and (2) the explanation of meaning to those outside who ask—the apologetic task.

The Christian child, by the time he is ready to take upon himself full membership in the church, should be able to understand in his own words, the meaning of the faith. This should not preclude the learning of historic creeds which link him with generations of Christians around the world who

have died for the realities which those words express. Kindergarten children could not memorize these, of course, but neither can there be any encouragement of versified simplifications of the creeds. The simple, rhythmic cadences of the Apostles' Creed can only be anticipated by the brevity of biblical formulations of the faith, such as "We believe in one God; and in one Lord, Jesus Christ."

It is true that the creeds have sometimes been used to measure the verbal acceptance of the faith of fellow Christians. It is equally a fact that when the church was witnessing to the world, particularly in times of stress, the creeds have been the words of testimony for which Christians gave their lives. In which kind of a situation are children being brought up today? The confession of faith as a form of witness needs rediscovery.

#### TEACHING THROUGH PERSONAL UNDERSTANDING

The same need to express our faith in words as well as in deeds has brought about a renewed interest in theologizing. Not since the dawn of the Reformation have so many detailed works of theology been written. Popular books on beliefs are widely read. "Inquirer" classes are well-attended. Young people want courses on "what Protestants believe." Theologizing is the church's attempt to explain the confessions more completely in the light of the situation in which people find themselves. Theology is addressed to the questions "why" and "how."

Even small children ask these questions in their own way. They cannot use adult answers, but they press for an answer meaningful to them. Some answers cut off further inquiry. Others evade the issue. There can be no wrong in sharing one's faith with a child, if the person is a parent or teacher. Every child becomes aware of a particular point of view from his parents. He may be told, "This is the answer," or "I don't know," or "There are many answers," or "This is what I believe." Christian nurture begins with a shared faith, but does not end there. The objective has been the day in which the child accepted the commitment for himself. This is basic in the questions asked when he is received into church membership. He is not asked, "Do you believe Jesus to be the Savior?" but "Do you accept Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord?"

The inquiry into Christian doctrine satisfies the intellectual curiosity of the growing child. He wants to know who God is, why there is evil in the world, or why he does wrong even when he doesn't really want to. Philosophy, sociology, and psychology supply answers. So does the Chris-

tian understanding of God as found in the Bible and in the experience of believers through the centuries.

The biblical understanding of the basic message points to another area for enriching religious education. This is to make the distinction between the evangelistic and the apologetic approach. An evangelistic outreach is needed today, but not in the sense of a campaign to bring new pupils to the church school or an effort to "win pupils to Christ." The need is to face the fact that thousands of children do not know what it is like to attend church, and come from families who know only a residual Christianity. One cannot presuppose any prior background in approaching these people. The Christian story is either new and fresh, or else it has been distorted in crude ways. Church publications have done little to meet this need.

Seminary students who work in slum areas, for instance, report that the middle-class locale of most church school materials is an embarrassment. Suburban gardens and fathers in business suits are not real-life situations to those children. Religious education materials reflect the middle-class character of Protestant Christianity. "Go ye into all the world" may be a command to go into an adjoining neighborhood. However, ignorance of the elementary facts of the Christian tradition may be found also in the background of children already in the church school. Their parents never learned anything at Sunday school and have not bothered to learn anything since. The children are "sent" to church school or they go with a friend. One can take nothing for granted in the way of foundational understanding or shared Christian experience. Even the materials prepared for parents in an effort to overcome this hiatus may fail at this point.

The apologetic task enters the picture here. If Betty comes to church school with a friend and Betty's parents are scornful intellectuals who feel superior to the church (or virtuous humanitarians who feel morally superior), how do the church school materials for parents and children seek to make the Christian faith meaningful to them? The concern here is not for conversion, but merely for toleration.

The misunderstanding of a secular society is reflected in the differences between some Christian meanings and popular speech. The child at school may hear the word "Nature." What does this mean? Is it a power in addition to God, subject to him, or set over against him? There is the term "fortune" or "luck." Is God impotent before this power, or does he not care, or does he, perhaps, have purposes which cannot be designated under the term "luck?" A generation which shuddered before the word "Provi-

dence" as "fatalism" (which it is not) accepts the determinism of science and psychology. Few stop to realize that the difference lies in the character of the power behind events. God, as Calvin and Augustine knew him, is the living God who made himself known in Jesus Christ and whose purposes are the expression of his love for his children. The power in back of modern scientific and psychological thought is an abstraction. That is why the church needs to help children to feel secure in spite of the "impersonal" forces about which they learn in school. This can happen through parents and teachers whose lives reveal a deep personal relationship with God.

Just as the original formulation of the good news came from the members of the Christian community and was spread abroad by them, so today this message can be the basis for a real and deep fellowship. For a generation, children have been given their own place in the church. Furniture has been scaled down, bathrooms built, resources developed, and chapels constructed—all on an age-group basis. This is good, but it can be carried so far as to become segregation. More than one teacher has found the ushers resentful if the children approached the church. "Too noisy," was the comment, or "they take up too much room." How truly are they descended from the Twelve!

The fact is that adults in many churches are not used to having the children around. The money invested in an educational wing put the children out of sight and sound. The church is the family of God, and is not complete unless it includes all ages who enjoy their fellowship together as well as their times alone. Nobody finds a one-room church adequate, but many now have had to find ways to bring the adults to the children and the children to the adults. The children's program needs to include provision for them to attend church and to enjoy a church supper (at a price their parents can afford). There is also a need for inviting people of deep Christian faith to participate briefly in the work of specific classes where their presence more than their words will help the children to know that all belong to a fellowship of those who love God.

#### THE TEACHING FOR LIVING

Another area in which the early understandings of the Christian faith can be of help is in the interpretation of the moral teaching. This has been considered of prime importance in curriculum materials for several generations. During the past twenty-five years it has been interpreted as "growing in Christian living." The aims were to help children to learn how to share,

to take turns, and to be helpful. Sometimes the implications in the teacher's notes came perilously close to the suggestion that God's love was dependent upon how children showed love to other people. The idea of service as free and joyous response to the realization of what God does for persons was missing.

The favorite Bible verses for use with children were moral exhortations cut from their roots. "Love one another" (which continues: "for love is of God"); "Be kind to one another" (which continues: "as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you"). Children were told that "Jesus went about doing good." This is from a classic formulation of the apostolic preaching, Peter's presentation to Cornelius. The verse was meant to suggest messianic powers, for it reads: "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed with the devil, for God was with him" (Acts 10:38). The problem of proof-texts is still unsolved!

Current studies in child development would seem to indicate that children cannot be taught to show love either by setting an example or by providing experiences in which they have to share and to take turns. The motives of human conduct lie deep within the person. Only the child who feels loved can love. Only the child who feels secure can be kind to others. Only the child who knows that he belongs can welcome others into the group. Mature Christians find it difficult enough to love their enemies and to do good to those who spitefully use them. A better way to teach children lies in sensing their needs and their situation, and assuring them by word and action as church school teachers that the living God loves them and that they truly belong at church.

Wise church school teachers are doing this all the time, for they know and love little children. But the written curriculum material seldom reflects this approach, and no material indicates a deep grappling with the relationship between a biblical viewpoint and psychological insights.<sup>2</sup> Christian living is a response to love, not to law. The purpose is not primarily to encourage smooth interpersonal relationships in group situations, or to develop well-integrated personalities. These are by-products. The purpose of Christian living is to witness to Christ and to show forth the love of God in the world.

<sup>2</sup> The charge made by Edith Hunter in the article "Neo-Orthodoxy Goes to Kindergarten" (*RELIGION IN LIFE*, vol. XX, No. 1, Winter 1950-51) has still not been faced. The work of Albert C. Outler in outlining the differences between Christian faith and psychotherapy has not been essayed from the standpoint of religious education. Cf. *Psychotherapy and the Christian Message*, Harper & Brothers, 1954.

That is why, increasingly, as the child grows, there should be some indication from those who teach, and in the materials used, that the difficulty of Christian living lies in the fact that this way of life is not shared by others. The curricula assume the setting of a Christian society when, as contemporary action and writing in general indicate, Christian presuppositions have been generally rejected, although the morality is accepted with reservations. Only the conservative publishing houses seek to give older children tools for facing this fact realistically.

How is the child to meet the unchurched child in a discussion of belief or a situation requiring action? What shall he say when he is ridiculed for going to church school? (Church school attendance is assumed only in suburban mores.) How shall he meet unchristian attitudes in his neighborhood? How is he to reconcile elementary school psychology of "self-development" with faith in the personal action of the Holy Spirit, or abstract scientific vocabulary with a knowledge of the living God? There are Christian children in the world today who see their parents faced with the decision as to how to make a good confession in the face of death. Christianity is an easy faith within the context of American culture.

Teaching can be enriched by introducing the child to the variety of forms by which Christians have always explained the faith to one another. No present written curriculum has a definite plan for teaching hymns to children with the expectation that each year they will become familiar with specific new ones. Even kindergarten children can learn such words and music from the church hymnal as "Rejoice, rejoice,/rejoice give thanks and sing"; "Lord of all, to thee we raise/this our hymn of grateful praise"; "Let all the world in every corner sing,/our God and King," and the refrain to *Adeste Fideles*. Compare these with the usual ditties for the small child.

If symbols could be seen again for what they once were—word pictures—they could have a much wider use in the church school. This becomes especially pertinent today when traditionally plain churches have taken to the use of a divided chancel and ornamental symbols. (There is a symbolism in the high center pulpit and the communion table among the people; there is a symbolism in the high communion table to which the people come and the pulpit in the midst of the congregation.) Symbols are used precisely because of the realization that some understandings are so great that the human mind and heart can never fully fathom them. The Cross means more to each person with every year that he grows. A symbol

acknowledges the existence of mystery and of the incomprehensible.

Pictures are another way in which Christian understandings are shared. They are a witness to the artist's faith and become an expression of faith for the Christian community. Such is the art of Rembrandt and of Rouault. Poetry, now as in the time when the New Testament was written, is a way of communication of the good news. When the prophet was "inspired," that is when the spirit of the Lord was upon him, he spoke oracles in poetic form. Little real poetry is used for the understanding of the faith today. Great music, poetry, and art involve the whole person. They require him to respond in body, mind, and feeling. But only great art can do this, and such has been largely denied the children who come to the church school to be nurtured.

The Christian faith has been expressed in the Bible through the record of what God has done: the good news of his saving work through Jesus Christ (the Proclamation) and through the record of how men responded to this message by their lives (the Teaching). Here is the core of Christian education. The experience of the church school can be more satisfying to teachers and children as increasingly this fullness of understanding is made available in meaningful ways to meet the needs of children in their situation. Our faith is in him in whom we have believed, and our life is a witness to make him known to all the world.

# “One of the Twelve”

*The Life and Thought of José Ortega y Gasset*

DAVID WHITE

## I

THERE IS A POPULAR refrain in philosophical circles to the effect that the South, southern Europe and the southern hemisphere, has never produced a first-class philosophic mind. The writings of Spain's late José Ortega y Gasset will be a permanent testimony to one very prominent exception. For forty years the philosopher of the vital reason, of life as mission and drama, has been among the foremost pioneers of Western thought. Ernst Curtius of Germany named him one of the twelve peers of the contemporary intellect. His death this past November has focused attention on his life and thought.

Ortega in the minds of Americans was for many years the man of one book, *The Revolt of the Masses*. While a stimulating essay in applied philosophy, neither it nor his other writings in English have been able to bring an appreciation of the depth and range of his thought nor of his full importance and influence. Under his inspiration and direction the Spanish-speaking world has broken with over two hundred years of philosophical poverty. A century-old bondage to French positivism was broken, and the riches of the most advanced circles of European thought were introduced into Spanish and Spanish-American intellectual circles, either through the writings and editorial efforts of Ortega himself or through his influence on others. Spain found itself in the forefront of modern thought. Spanish students reading Heidegger, Spengler, Sartre, found themselves already conversant with their ideas. Studying in the universities of Germany, the philosophical capital of Europe, they found it was their professor in the chair of metaphysics in Madrid that was being discussed.

This new generation formed under his tutelage took over the intellectual production of their countries, displacing the disciples of Comte on

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the one hand and the Jesuits on the other. Dr. Alberto Rembaño, editor of *La Nueva Democracia*, tells of his experience as a school principal in Mexico some years ago where he discovered that the great majority of the school texts in history, philosophy, the sciences, were written by Jesuits. Today most of these have been displaced by the products of the colleagues and disciples of Ortega. Neither is it accidental that in Spanish and Latin-American bookstores the finest products of modern European intellectual labor are available in Spanish translations long before they are obtainable, if at all, in English. This is a direct result of the efforts of Ortega to make his Spanish-speaking contemporaries aware of the best in European thought.

Ortega was more than a philosopher; he was an artist in the Platonic tradition in making philosophy not only readable but also poetical, by the beauty and correctness of his literary style. On reading Ortega one must be careful not to let admiration for his style obscure the genius of his thought. One writer, commenting on his death, claimed for Ortega a place second only to Cervantes in his mastery of the Spanish language, his capacity to make of it an instrument of beauty and clarity. By preference he chose the essay as his principle literary vehicle. The greater part of his work is scattered among magazines, the newspapers and other periodicals which people are reading daily, where they would but infrequently pick up a book, much less one on philosophy.

He was a man with a mission: to awaken the Spanish intellectuals to the rebuilding of Spain, politically, artistically, intellectually. He felt himself to be an awakener, a prober into new possibilities of interpretation of the human situation. At all times, in a manner that is characteristically Iberian, he is seeking to engage the reader in conversation rather than to develop an extended dissertation.

He is a seedbed of ideas, anticipating or at least accompanying men such as Spengler, Jaspers, Heidegger, Toynbee. The basic thesis of Spengler and Toynbee was anticipated in his writings, though never given the extensive historical illustration that the other two gave it. However, this has not left him in the situation of a Toynbee who must at times cease to be the objective historian as he seeks to interpret his material to fit his theories, the "three-and-a-half beats" of the disintegration process. Ortega was continually moving on, much as Einstein in another field, leaving to others the task of application to specific historical periods and epochs. Occasionally he would dedicate himself to apply his principles to a specific problem, as

he does in *En Torno a Galileo*,<sup>1</sup> a discussion of the existential reality of those generations between 1550 and 1650 which inaugurated modern thought—although even here the reader finds the illustrative material brief and the philosophical probing extensive. There are few sections in Ortega where the reader can relax his concentration and let his gaze wander rapidly over a large section of illustrative material. Every trip, every picture, is an occasion for an interlude, so that the mind may extract from the occasion all the meditative riches available.

## II

He was born in Madrid, May 9, 1883, son of an outstanding Spanish journalist, José Ortega y Munillo. He was one of those who gave an early indication of his genius. Once, when only seven years old, while recovering from an illness he asked for a book to read. He was given the famous Spanish classic by Cervantes, *Don Quijote*. Three hours later he was able to recite the entire first chapter from memory. He received a solid training in classical culture and language in a Jesuit secondary school, later receiving his doctorate in Philosophy and Letters from the University of Madrid. From the publication of his first newspaper essays when only nineteen there is evidence of his literary brilliance.

The most formative and decisive period in his subsequent thought was the fruit of several years of study in Germany at the universities of Leipzig, Berlin, and Marburg with such professors as Cohen and Simmel. He returned to Madrid convinced of the necessity of Europeanizing a decadent Spain. He threw himself into an intense literary dialogue with as many of his contemporaries as possible. Despite a common desire to revive Spain, to have it born again, his youthful enthusiasm soon brought him into conflict with his great elder contemporary, the dour and gloomy Basque, Miguel de Unamuno. An anecdote relates an encounter between the two. Ortega, fresh from Germany and aflame with the desire to reform Spain, had suggested that he and the older man form an alliance with himself, Ortega, as a kind of junior partner. "A sort of father-son relationship?" asked Unamuno. "Yes," replied Ortega, "that's the idea." Somewhat piqued by the younger man's brashness Unamuno closed the incident, exclaiming, "Good, but you should know that I am already the Holy Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Ghost!"

By the time he was thirty Ortega was already the leading philosophic

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<sup>1</sup> *Obras Completas*, Vol. V, pp. 10-164.

figure in the Spanish-speaking world, surpassing Unamuno. He was no arm-chair philosopher; a brilliant orator as well as writer and teacher, he dedicated himself to the problems of Spain, intellectual and political. He founded Spain's most influential newspaper, *El Sol*, and later the intellectual review and editorial house of the same name, *Revista de Occidente*, which specialized in putting into Spanish the works of Simmel, Frank, Husserl, Russell, Weil, Otto, Max Scheler, Brentano, Dilthey, and others.<sup>2</sup>

The establishment of the Spanish Republic in 1931 was due in no small degree to his writings and speeches. He was elected a member of the Cortes, the governing assembly, but soon became disillusioned with that same "rule of the masses," with only a desire for rights and no thought of duties, that he had diagnosed earlier in *The Revolt of the Masses*.<sup>3</sup> By the start of the Spanish Civil War in 1936 he had returned to his teaching and his writing. Soon after its beginning he left for France, later Argentina and then Portugal, out of sympathy with either group. Most of the Spanish Republican expatriates have never forgiven him what they have considered his desertion, many confusing their political prejudices with their judgment of his philosophy.

In 1945 he returned to Madrid, but was not allowed to resume his philosophy chair at the University, and there was a virtual news blackout regarding his activities in the Spanish press. There he stayed, except for a visit to the United States to take part in the Goethe Festival at Aspen, Colorado. Among his last public lectures was an analysis of the writings and theories of Arnold Toynbee; though of much more importance, should it ever be published, is the drawing together of his labors in the *Aurora de la razón histórica*. Nevertheless, in its essentials his thought had been worked out in its main conceptions, which we will now examine briefly.

### III

Ortega y Gasset's main philosophical interests are twofold, although closely interrelated; on the one hand a thoroughgoing criticism and re-evaluation of the central stream of the philosophic tradition, and on the other the development of a philosophy of history. After his initial infatuation with the neo-Kantianism of his German professors, there came a profound reaction to the rationalism of almost the whole of philosophical thinking

<sup>2</sup> This same editorial house has published the complete works of Ortega through 1941 in six large volumes. José Ortega y Gasset, *Obras Completas*, Madrid; *Revista de Occidente*, 2nd edition, 1950-52, 6 vol.

<sup>3</sup> Mentor Books, New York City, The New American Library, 1950.

since the time of Plato and Aristotle. This is centered in his criticism of the classical concept of Being, with a rejection of the principle of identity as the basic philosophical point of departure (a crime for which Thomists cannot forgive him), and the use of "my life" as the starting point for an understanding of reality.

The vitality and validity of his subsequent thought largely rests on this new starting point. If Ortega is to be refuted it must be done at the point of his challenge to the soundness of the concept of identity and his criticism of rationalism in general. If he is not met here, traditional philosophy just misses the point in its criticism of the subsequent development of the implications of his fundamental affirmation. Much Roman Catholic criticism to date has failed to come to grips with the central challenge of existentialist thought in general just as this point. Roman thought has refused to re-examine the validity of its primary principle of the identity of being. It has simply assumed it is not to be questioned, and has then proceeded on its destructive criticism of the various ramifications of existentialist thought. It has thereby missed the point of the entire discussion, which challenges the fundamental presuppositions for an interpretation of reality.<sup>4</sup>

1. Rationalism or intellectualism in all its forms seeks to make of reason an absolute which is definitive for all of life, sacrificing all other value to it. Reason always abstracts from reality, leaving us with that which is but the shell of reality, the life having been lost in the process. Reason "thingifies" life. It seeks to reduce phenomena to their basic elements only to discover that, faced by these elements, the mind ceases to be rational. One of two things happens; it either does not understand these basic elements, or it knows them by some irrational medium. "Before these the analysis or rationalizing would stop and only *intuition* would fit. In reason itself we find . . . an abyss of irrationality."<sup>5</sup> Reason ultimately rests back upon a faith relationship.

Reason also abstracts from reality just that which it can understand, and then projects the structure derived back upon the world as an imperative. Here he criticizes Fichte in particular. In his book, *Ideas y Creencias*,<sup>6</sup> he states that rationalism is thus antihistorical, for it does not seek to accept

<sup>4</sup> A particularly good illustration of this is the book, *Ortega y Gasset, Existentialist, A Critical Study of His Thought and Its Sources*, by the Mexican Jesuit priest, José Sánchez Villaseñor, S. J. Chicago, Henry Regnery Co., 1949.

<sup>5</sup> "Ni Vitalismo, ni Racionalismo," *Obras Completas*, Vol. III, p. 274.

<sup>6</sup> *Obras Completas*, Vol. V, pp. 379-492.

history as it is but rather seeks to regulate it by abstract principles, by reason. In effect, reason nullifies life.

Do not make the mistake of considering Ortega an irrationalist; few modern thinkers have insisted so emphatically on the necessity of a full and accurate use of man's reasoning faculty. He is insisting that reason be given its proper place; it is an instrument for living, not life itself. There must be a basis other than reason for an understanding of man. This basic datum for Ortega would be what he calls *mi vida*, my life, which would be equivalent to what Heidegger calls *Existenz*. In this connection Ortega does not seek to understand being, for "being" to him is a static and general term and therefore cannot be used as the basic concept through which to understand life. Life is not static, and my life is certainly not being in general.

Here is where Ortega parts most radically with the traditional thought which has dominated since Parmenides, with its concept of being and the principle of identity. Once thought does its work upon reality and life is intellectualized into a concept of "identical being," life in its nature, essence, being is conceived as fixed, static, predetermined. We should renounce this intellectualism or pure reason or physico-mathematical reason, as he variously calls it, and recognize it for what it is, a logical abstraction.

Life, not being, is the essential datum for understanding reality. It is not static as is being; it is drama, mission, vocation. It is what we find ourselves with upon becoming conscious of our existence, but not as something we receive ready-made. Rather, man discovers himself in a state of shipwreck, cast adrift upon the sea of existence. In Christian terminology we would say, man finds himself a sinner. Ortega himself also calls this a "sense of perdition." A necessity for man's salvation is to realize he is shipwrecked. Once he discovers this he will ask the basic question of existence, not "What am I?" (the question of being), but rather, "Who am I?"

I find "my life" not "something," but a task handed to me, a project of existence, something to be made. It is this task that is my authentic being. This task or project is not a plan or idea conceived by man and freely elected, but comes to him as a vocation, a mission inexorably proposed. We are free to realize, or not, the vital mission that is our authentic being, but we cannot change it. Here my freedom is open to the future and pregnant with possibility. It is also a freedom faced by decision. In one thing I have no freedom, that is, in the necessity to affirm or deny my individual project of existence. The story of a man's life is the story of his approxima-

tion to or his evasion of his mission, of his fight with his vocation. "Man is the novelist of himself."

My life cannot be considered in itself apart from my circumstances. "I am I plus my circumstances." I am not just "my life" within myself, I am also he that "lives with" other selves. All of these further relationships are part of the circumstances in which my life is lodged and with which I interact in seeking to realize my project of existence. Ortega insists on the identity and the dignity of the individual, but never lets him forget he is responsible to a context much wider than himself and indeed, cannot understand himself outside of that context. The question rises as to how we can know this vocation, task, mission that is ours. This for Ortega is the task of the "vital reason," which in turn is taken up in the more comprehensive "historical reason."

2. As one of the activities of life, of existence, I think. It is in making thought primary that rationalism has proceeded to impose upon life a static abstraction of the reason. This rationalization or "pure reason" or "pure physico-mathematical reason" is that against which Ortega is in constant revolt. Reason should be subservient to life in its vitality and dynamism. It should be in constant interplay with life seeking to interpret reality, but always in a tentative way, never to dictate to it. When this happens, reason becomes vital reason. Reason seen in this vital context was the theme of Ortega's most important philosophical work, *El Tema de Nuestro Tiempo* (*The Theme of Our Time*), based on lectures given in a university course in 1921-22.<sup>7</sup> However, since that time Ortega has preferred the term "historical reason" as being more adequate.

Before going further it may be well to mention here the discussion or controversy regarding the originality of Ortega y Gasset's ideas, his possible indebtedness to Wilhelm Dilthey in his concept of the historical reason, his indebtedness or his contribution to Heidegger and others. Some have maintained he was essentially a popularizer, a propagandist of others' ideas, giving them their apparent originality through the magic of his pen. He himself is constantly referring to this similarity and at times coincidence of ideas and concepts, referring to the writings of his own which antedated, for example, Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit* or Spengler's *The Decline of the West*. This and other similar problems in the history of ideas often are best explained in terms of Ortega's own theory of the characteristic theme of "the generation." Each generation inherits a certain intellectual climate

<sup>7</sup> *Obras Completas*, Vol. III, pp. 143-242.

that, in more or less degree, is general over Europe or some such other region. It is only natural that original creative minds, even though relatively independent and unbeknown to each other, may arrive at highly similar conclusions.

As we have seen, my life, your life, any life, is not characterized by some static being, but is a project, a task, a gerund not a participle. In life I am constantly faced by choices as I seek to "make myself," to determine what I am to be. In this choosing I am always faced by what I have been, or better, by what I have lived. The past is always acting negatively on what I am in the process of becoming. To understand myself I am in constant conversation not only with my present surroundings but with my past. I am making my past present in my life that I might learn from it. In this situation, my reasoning is a "narration" with existence rather than an imperative thrust upon it. It is reason as a narration that gives meaning to life, and it is this which Ortega calls "historical reason."

Alongside pure physico-mathematical reason there is, then, a narrative reason. To comprehend anything human, be it personal or collective, one must tell its history. This man, this nation does such a thing and is in such a manner *because* formerly he or it did that other thing and was in such another manner. Life only takes on a measure of transparency in the light of *historical reason*.<sup>8</sup>

It is in the light of this that Ortega says that "*man, in a word, has no nature, what he has is . . . history . . . what nature is to things, history . . . is to man.*"<sup>9</sup>

In the light of the past I am continually forming new programs for living in which I seek satisfactorily to meet life. This program is the work of my reason and is static. It is the flailing of my arms to keep afloat as I flounder shipwrecked in the ocean of existence. As I relate these programs, ideas, philosophies, etc. to life, experience reveals shortcomings and limitations in the light of which I again create a new program of existence. Unless we understand our past, we can have no understanding or realistic plan of action for the future. This is why we must examine the past possessively. Ortega criticizes those who would seek to start from the beginning all over again. This is an impossibility. We are what we are because we stand on the shoulders of preceding generations. We can only understand ourselves as we seek to understand them. They are in a very real manner present in us.

Thus philosophy of history for Ortega—and to him all philosophy is

<sup>8</sup> "History as a System," in *Toward a Philosophy of History*, New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1941, p. 214.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 217.

in a way philosophy of history—is the use of historical reason in understanding man's existence; or in other words philosophy of history can in a sense be called the history of philosophy. By history of philosophy is not meant merely seeking to outline Plato's or Spinoza's arguments but to search them possessively that they might become, inasmuch as is possible, a part of my present life. Not even this is adequate. We should also seek to know these philosophies in their context as the expression of a life, the philosopher's life, arising out of that life and not merely as an abstraction created by the intellect. This is equally true in other fields of historical study, politics, economics, art, religion.

This, the exercise of the historical reason, is a living interaction of the mind with life—past, present, and future. In this context the historian is not merely a chronicler of the past but a prophet of the future. Individuals, generations, nations, each have their mission which is the key to authenticity in their various existences. It is the task of the historical reason to seek the mission of my life, this university, this nation, our generation. Ortega's own mission was to seek out through the use of the vital or historical reason the "signs of the times," to forecast the future, and to discern the outline of the mission of his generation. With brilliant and penetrating insight he did just that in *The Theme of Our Time*, *The Revolt of the Masses*, and other writings.

#### IV

There is a definite Protestant quality to Ortega's concept of man's authentic being consisting in a mission, a vocation, a task. He had reacted against Roman Catholicism, not in the tradition of the rationalist free-thinker, the anticlerical so common in the Latin countries of both Europe and the Americas, but as one who intimately knew the structure of Roman Catholic thought and found it wanting. In later years he describes Thomism as an "Aristotelian betrayal" of the basic Christian genius, as the earlier Middle Ages had been a Platonist betrayal. He never seems as conversant with Protestant thought. He never came to profess any particular religious faith, although he never says he is not a Christian, only that he is not a Roman Catholic.<sup>10</sup>

The Protestant flavor of his thought comes from his deep indebtedness to German thought and culture; and despite his opposition to the Kantian

<sup>10</sup> There has been considerable comment on Ortega y Gasset's supposed reconciliation with the Roman Catholic Church as contained in the earliest news reports of his death. As more detailed reports came out of Spain, it became clear that he was already in an unconscious state when the priest arrived, having been sent for by his wife, and that no words passed between Ortega and the priest.

tradition as expressed in neo-Kantianism, the Kantian emphasis on duty—a Protestant heritage in Kant—shows through in Ortega's emphasis on responsibility in an individual, a nation, a generation. Those Protestant theologians who look sympathetically at existentialism as a possible philosophical medium will find much in Ortega's thought to recommend it, particularly in bringing Reformation thought on "vocation" into focus on the contemporary scene.

Along other lines one finds his philosophy extremely suggestive in its implications for the interplay between philosophical and theological thought, although as we pass from the philosophical to the theological we are in the realm of supposition and implication. Ortega himself says nothing in regard to it, and we may at times ask more of him than we have a right to ask. There are some Latin American Protestant intellectuals who criticize the philosophy of Ortega *qua* philosophy, because Ortega, the philosopher, never became Ortega, the professed Evangelical Christian.<sup>11</sup>

Both Thomistic and the various forms of Idealistic philosophy holding to the primacy of the intellect have created philosophic systems which rob the historical scene of most of its vitality and decisive importance. Reality is seen ultimately as static rather than dynamic. Even God becomes a part of the system and his action is restricted to what the system imposes upon him. Actually, he fulfills a function determined by the system. While some of these would attribute the reason to God's creative activity, the logical implications are that God is the creation of the intellect. The so-called theistic philosophies in effect so exalt man and limit God that man has little need of God.

The existential philosophy of Ortega y Gasset, which says little about God, actually leaves God free and man open to God's activity. Reality is not closed or static but open to the future and vital with possibility. Ortega's philosophy would rightfully condemn the gods of philosophical systems as creations of the intellect, as the creation of God in man's rational image. Here, however, God can never be known rationally except as a meditation after the fact of his activity. God must be met in a personal encounter within life, in such a philosophy, if he is to be other than a rational abstraction.

Ortega's philosophy of history gives the historical event vital importance. It is not a shadowy "moving image of eternity," but the very

<sup>11</sup> This is one of the limitations of the otherwise very excellent book on Ortega, *El Centauro, Persona y Pensamiento de Ortega y Gasset*, by Domingo Marrero, professor in the University of Puerto Rico, and formerly in the Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico; Puerto Rico, Imprenta Soltero, 1951.

essence of life in the making. Both Idealism and Thomism tend to rob the historical event of any decisive significance. As a result they also rob the Incarnation of its decisive importance. They don't know exactly what to do with Christ. Ortega in his advocacy of the historical reason does one thing—he insures that all history must be taken seriously. While he does not give Christ decisive importance, he leaves the way open for such an acknowledgment to take place. To understand our own experience we must see our life in the light of history, and Christ is a part of history. Christ must be taken into account, he must be encountered whatever our reaction to the encounter might be, if we would know ourselves at all. What is lacking in Ortega's philosophy is that nothing leads us to give Christ that decisive significance he has in the life of the Christian over other historical figures and events.

But after all, Ortega is writing philosophy and not testimony. Each moment in time has its importance, but the question remains as to what gives what event the deciding importance. Personally, I feel it is just as well that the matter remains open in Ortega, for only in the encounter of each life with Christ does Christ become all-significant. He then illuminates history and "my life" as he becomes a reality of personal experience in a personal revealing encounter. It is that experience that then gives rise to creeds and doctrines and gives them whatever authenticity they may have. Without the encounter these creeds and doctrines are as tinkling cymbal and sounding brass.

The philosophy of Ortega y Gasset keeps man open toward the future, and incidentally open toward God. Life is not a closed affair already determined by the impervious demand of reason. Man is not some *thing*, but a conduct, a drama, a project. The man who seeks to realize a project seeks ends, ultimates, and eventually the ultimate. In his inability to realize them in himself, he is driven back upon his own insufficiency or shipwreck. This for the Christian is the first condition necessary in man's salvation in eventually turning him to God. It is not, as Ortega would have it, his salvation—to realize that one is shipwrecked is but the first step toward salvation.

The question might be asked if non-Christian existentialism in general can ever do more than gain a realization of man's shipwrecked condition. Can it ever do more than make this movement that is the first condition of salvation, but is not salvation? It might be further asked if it can ever arrive at a knowledge of just how shipwrecked a man can be, without an

encounter with the living God. Can man ever find his vocation, his life project, apart from God?

The lucidity, the clarity and beauty of Ortega's style, the ease of its translation as well as the inherent worth and attractiveness of his thought, have resulted in an increasing influence in American intellectual circles during the past ten years. This should increase considerably as more of his basic works are translated or gathered together into book form. While José Ortega y Gasset, the man, is dead, José Ortega y Gasset, the philosopher, is just becoming alive in the United States.

# The Hinge of History

CARL MICHALSON

*"We may say of Christianity that it is the most mystical religion in the world, and with equal truth that it is a religion not at all mystical but rather historical and everyday."*<sup>1</sup>

*"The message of the forgiving grace of God in Jesus Christ is no historical report over a past event, but it is the preached word of the church which now speaks to everyone immediately as God's word and in which Jesus Christ is present as the Word."*<sup>2</sup>

## I

THAT CHRISTIANITY is historical is not self-evident. There is what Baron von Hügel called a "sheer happenedness" in Christianity, by which is generally meant that the Christian faith had its source in an event. Jesus Christ *happened* in the midst of a people. He came as the very *act* of God. And his appearance set off a chain of *events*, the Church. His presence, therefore, is a hinge. Happening in time, he both connects and separates the old and the new, the past and the future.

But there is no consensus as to what history is, and as long as that is true, Christianity is not unambiguously historical. Confusion about the meaning of history dates as far back as the beginning of the Christian movement. The truth of God entered human events in Jesus Christ, but the available categories for expressing the significance of this event came from the Greeks, who had little interest in events. Actually, they had a positive aversion to anything that "happened." Ultimate truth for Greek philosophy does not happen; it simply is. Events were self-incriminating. Their very "happenedness" was a sign they were transitory and lacked finality.

Now the Christians testified that the truth of God happened in Jesus Christ, but when they gave systematic expression to that witness, they

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<sup>1</sup> Berdyaev, Nicholas, *The Meaning of the Creative Act*, Harper & Brothers, 1955, p. 298.

<sup>2</sup> Bultmann, Rudolf, *Glauben und Verstehen*, Vol. I, Tübingen, J. C. B. Mohr, 1933, p. 332.

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allowed Christ's temporal eventfulness to be overshadowed by his eternal and unchanging being. The intellectual agonies of the early creeds tacitly confess the uncongenial alliance between Greek and Christian categories. Instance the Chalcedonian creed with its substantialistic parallelism of true godhood and true manhood in Jesus Christ, which "suppresses one of the dimensions of the gospel *kerygma*, time."<sup>3</sup>

Today the eventfulness of the faith is prominent in the concern of every theologian, hence the old decision between Greek categories and Hebrew categories has lost much of its cruciality. To say that the Greeks affirmed eternal truths of reason while the Hebrews affirmed the truth of events is now virtually a theological banality. Theologians are almost unanimous that Christian truth happens. But there is another Greek endowment of theology which affects Christian understanding of history at a different point. Affiliated as are events and time, an influential bequest of Greece to the Christian theology of history was its view of time.

Time, which Plato called the moving image of eternity, is always slipping into the past. Events, which happen in time, must always be considered like nature from an objective and spatial distance. Thereafter, when the Christian faith was written in the Platonic tradition, what was meant by its historicity was that it is somehow tied up with the irrevocable but irrecoverable facts of the past. Likewise, time, which Aristotle called a measurable succession of moments, can be stretched out like a panorama, like the spectacle of nature. Like fields of the midwestern plains, it can be divided up in sections. It can be measured by numbered spaces on a map or the sweep of the clock's hand. Thereafter, when one said in the Aristotelian tradition that Christianity is historical, he meant that he could map out the dispensations of God's grace and chart the timetable in God's plan of salvation. Jesus Christ, happening on the landscape of time, becomes by this view an object for cartographer and chronologist alike.

To be sure, Augustine had more of a sense for history than any theologian before him, except possibly Irenaeus. But he found the historical character of Christianity baffling in the context of this Greek heritage. And was he not tempted toward the common sense view of time which Greek philosophy had standardized, when he said, "What now is clear and plain is, that neither things to come nor past *are*"?<sup>4</sup> If history is the factuality of past events stretching out *seriatim*, and what is past *is not*; and if Christ

<sup>3</sup> Leuba, J. L., *L'Institution et L'évènement*, quoted in Jean Daniélou, *Essai sur le Mystère de l'Histoire*, Paris, Editions du Seuil, 1953, p. 182.

<sup>4</sup> *Confessions* XI, 26.

is said to be historical, how can he who is past *be* our Lord in the present? How can we feel his hand in the present if we hear his voice as past?

In the context of this kind of question, it does not seem strange that theologians have denied that Christianity is historical. For by the denial they affirm faith as present. It does not seem strange that Franz Overbeck, the Basel church historian of the early part of this century, would insist, "If it is Christianity, then it is not history. If it is history, then it is not Christianity."<sup>5</sup> Nor was it strange that the Zürich pastor, Hermann Kutter, would pronounce that Christ is our present, immediate Lord, and "the immediate has no history,"<sup>6</sup> or that Ernst Troeltsch, the German theologian, would declare, "History is no place for absolute persons or absolute religions; history and absolute are contradictory."<sup>7</sup> Actually, there is very little that is historical in the writings of Paul the apostle. That is to say, Paul speaks not of what is past but of the presence of the living Lord. It is the presence of Christ and not his past which confers upon Paul the same apostolic status given the original disciples. And the contemporary Christian claims the same relation to Christ which Paul had. For Jesus Christ is not the great "I was" but the great "I am." To contemplate him is not to stand away from him at a historical distance but to enter into his life now.

Contemporary theology inherits both the sense of the historicity of the Christian faith and the protests against its historicity. The traditional churches have conserved the sense of history, arching over time to hinge the present to the past. The sectarian groups and mystics have conserved the protest against history by their flight beyond successiveness and their intimate perpendicular communion with the being of God. At the present moment, the current great insistence in Christian theology is that the Christian faith is historical.

The question remains, however, as to whether this truth can be expressed without either falling into archaism or reacting from archaism into docetism. Can we now take the historical character of the Christian faith seriously without making theology a branch of the historical sciences, always striving to recover an irrecoverable past—a labor of Sisyphus? Or can we resist the temptation to abandon the potentially sterile tasks of the historian and install theology as the handmaiden of a kind of nonhistorical mysticism? The thesis of my remarks here will be that these extremes can be outflanked

<sup>5</sup> Karl Barth's paraphrase of Overbeck's position in a review of Overbeck's *Christentum und Kultur* entitled "Unerledigte Anfragen an die heutige Theologie," in *Zur inneren Lage des Christentums*, Munich, Kaiser, 1920, p. 9.

<sup>6</sup> Kutter, H., *Das Unmittelbare*, Basel, Kober C. F. Spittlers Nachfolger, 1921, p. 321.

<sup>7</sup> Troeltsch, E., *Die Absolutheit des Christentums*, third edition. Tübingen, J. C. B. Mohr, 1912, p. 35.

if the common sense view of history, dignified and authorized for western thought by Greek philosophy, is amended by some dimensions of the meaning of history implicit in the New Testament faith.

## II

Jesus Christ is "the hinge of history." I draw the metaphor not from Winston Churchill but from the French Catholic theologian, Jean Daniélou.<sup>8</sup> However, I do not use the metaphor as Daniélou does, following his colleague, Oscar Cullmann, in the service of a linear view of time. I do not mean that Christ hinges together some past time, even the times of the history of Israel, with the Christian future. That would be to reimport the Greek and common sense view of time. Rather, I mean that he takes all times off their hinges and becomes himself the Lord of time (1 Tim. 1:17). As Lord of time he holds all moments together in the co-inherence of his life (Col. 1:17). To know who he is means to have a history. For history is life with a meaning, and only one who is at the beginning and at the end of time, only one who is the Lord of time holds all times together. Only he who is the fullness of time fills time with the ultimate meaning that constitutes it history.

Hegel sensed this truth, though dimly, when he affirmed that to live with meaning each man must in his own short life relive the whole journey of mankind. What was a protean project for Hegel is a divine gift for the simplest Christian. Irenaeus made that truth patent when he pictured Christ as the man who perfectly recapitulates the life of every other man and on his behalf. Albert Camus, the French existentialist, is even more radical about the requirements for meaningful life. "History only exists in the final analysis to God,"<sup>9</sup> he claims, for only God begins and ends the whole gamut of man's times. But what is true for God is given in Christ, the Lord of time. To be with Christ is to have the beginning and the end of all things at the center, and where Christ is there is the center. Even to live in the Old Testament is to live in prehistory, for the Old Testament lives toward the end from the beginning. But to be in the New Testament, in the faith in Christ is to live from the beginning *and* the end, hence to have history. A Christian lives in history, you see, not because he undergoes a process of time. Not even because he undergoes a process for which he is able, by imagination and speculation, to provide an orderly pattern of

<sup>8</sup> Daniélou, J., *op. cit.*, p. 193.

<sup>9</sup> Camus, A., *The Rebel*, Alfred A. Knopf, 1953, p. 256.

explanation. He lives in history because he is confronted by Jesus Christ who is the beginning and the end, and thus confers upon each moment of the process the whole meaning of the process.

Without the fullness of time, without the fulfilled event of Christ, our lives fall forward ambiguously. With it they are supported by a completed purpose. Without it we live toward a diffuse and ill-defined future. With it we know that God is our future. This happening transforms "sheer happenedness" into history. "From this moment onward," as the Gospels put it (Matt. 26:64; or more clearly, Luke 22:69), our past becomes pre-history, our future is filled with purpose, and our present already lives by a fulfilled hope (Eph. 1:15ff.).

But this structure of past, present, and future is no longer the chronological sequence of measured time. It is the transition from the abyss in our wake, which is nihilism or death, to the luminous immensity ahead, which is salvation or life. Past, present, and future as successive moments are telescoped into one redemptive moment in the presence of the "I am" for whom past, present, and future are one (Heb. 13:8; Rev. 1:8, 22:13). Now "we have been born anew to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 Pet. 1:3). God has overlooked the "times of our ignorance" when it was not known that Christ was the Lord of time and the fullness of time (Acts 17:30-31). Christ is the beginning and the end of all things, and he is now "at hand" (1 Pet. 4:7, cf. Mark 1, Gal. 4, Eph. 1).

After the appearance of Christ in the time of man, the whole concept of linear successiveness is set askew. Christ walks up and down the pages of world history with very little consideration for its consecutive character, much as a fly walks back and forth across the calendar on your wall. And in so doing a dimension beyond chronological time is insinuated. Moses is said to speak of Christ, Abraham to be saved by his faith in Christ, and the thief on the cross will be with Christ in paradise three days in advance of Christ's own resurrection. This contradiction of our customary prejudice about the irreversibility of chronological time has modern science as its ally —as in the case of Miss Bright of limerick fame:

There was a young girl named Miss Bright,  
Who could travel much faster than light.  
She departed one day,  
In an Einsteinian way,  
And came back on the previous night.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Quoted in George Gamow's *One Two Three . . . Infinity*, Mentor Book, 1953, p. 105.

## III

Now it is interesting that some theologians are willing to demythologize the space concepts of the Bible but not the time concepts.<sup>11</sup> It is curious to discover that what they usually guard in the concept of time, however, is precisely its spatial character, that is, its chronological successiveness. Are not such words as "past" and "future" fully as symbolic as the words "above" and "below," and do they not in most instances carry spatial connotations, as in the case of the words "before" and "after"? <sup>12</sup> It is clear that the common sense view of history is prominent in the Bible. It could not be otherwise. Our "natural" outlook on things dictates it. But in the "biblical" outlook, the distinctive and decisive emphasis is not the common sense view. The Bible affirms not so much that Jesus Christ is in history as that Jesus Christ constitutes history. "Revelation is not a predicate of history but history is a predicate of revelation."<sup>13</sup> Quite obviously Jesus Christ is a happening in the time of the world. But more profoundly, Jesus Christ has unhinged our worldly times and refastened them to the life of God.

Gerhard Krüger, a contemporary German philosopher, in his influential lecture entitled *History in the Thought of the Present* has given philosophical expression to the ingredients in this view of history.

Every solution of the problem of history presupposes that history be essentially at an end; it can indeed reckon with an open future but only so that the truth already discovered in principle must still be brought to universal preeminence. . . . The possibility of understanding history from within history rests simply on this, that history has already become essentially comprehensible as a whole.<sup>14</sup>

Nowhere in the entire delineation of the events which constitute our falling forward can we point and say, "There is the end," except in Jesus Christ. To treat the event of Christ biographically and thus to make of Christ a participant in our history is, of course, a possibility in his very manner of appearing. But that would be a secularization of the gospel, for the gospel says he is among us—not simply alongside us—as the exalted source of our meaningful life.

Secular counterparts of this view of history are instructive. Marxism

<sup>11</sup> Théo Preiss, *La Vie en Christ*, chapter translated in English under the title "The Vision of History in the New Testament," *Journal of Religion*, XXX, No. 3, July, 1950, p. 160.

<sup>12</sup> As Roger Shinn has rightly suggested in his helpful book, *Christianity and the Problem of History*, Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1953, p. 212f.

<sup>13</sup> Barth, Karl, *Die kirchliche Dogmatik I, 2*, Zürich, Evangelischer, 1945, p. 64.

<sup>14</sup> Krüger, G., *Die Geschichte im Denken der Gegenwart*, Frankfurt, Wissenschaft und Gegenwart No. 16, 1947, p. 24.

illustrates it, dividing time as it does into prehistory and history, with history beginning at the proletarian revolt. The intention of time which constitutes history of our process is not present, according to Marx, before that moment. A most pathetic illustration is present in the wail of the French Imperialists today as they say, "Without North Africa . . . France would have no history in the twenty-first century."<sup>15</sup> By this they do not mean that France would cease to exist, to move eventually through linear time. They simply mean that the existence of France would be rendered unsupportable by the loss of her colony. Probably the most persuasive illustration can be adduced from the sort of experience D. H. Lawrence sketches. Separated from his beloved Lady Cynthia, he writes to her, "We have no history, since we saw you last. I feel as if I had less than no history—as if I had spent those five months in a tomb."<sup>16</sup> To be isolated from the be-all and end-all of one's existence is to be more dead than alive.

The confession that Jesus Christ constitutes history is simply the acknowledgment that he is the source of our meaningful life. We cannot then, discuss him without presupposing him. When you presuppose him, you have entered into the history which he creates. It is therefore unprofitable if not unintelligible to insist, as various theologians do, geared to a common sense view of time, that the revelational events recorded in the Bible "took place at a certain historical time and place";<sup>17</sup> or that the covenant relationship with God in the Bible "is a matter of historical fact";<sup>18</sup> or that Christianity is a historical religion because it "presents us with religious doctrines which are at the same time historical events."<sup>19</sup>

The historical character of the Christian faith inheres in the way in which the exalted Christ creates our history. We have not the historical Jesus but the exalted Christ to worship. Nor have we Abraham and Moses to remember, but Christ. He is near us in a way in which no other past is present. Abraham and Moses are in our religious memory, but not as Christ is. While we may re-enact from the past the days both of Moses and of Christ, the Christ remembered is infinitely closer to us than the Moses remembered. For Christ's nearness is not an attribute of his relative temporal proximity. He is near because he constitutes our history, as for instance Moses does not. Origen has rightly said of the event of Christ,

<sup>15</sup> *Time Magazine*, September 5, 1955, p. 12.

<sup>16</sup> *The Portable D. H. Lawrence*, Viking Press, 1955, p. 569. Letter written January 30, 1915.

<sup>17</sup> Wright, G. Ernest, *God Who Acts*, Henry Regnery Co., 1952, p. 50.

<sup>18</sup> Richardson, Alan, *Christian Apologetics*, Harper & Brothers, 1947, p. 91.

<sup>19</sup> Butterfield, Herbert, *Christianity and History*, Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1950, p. 3.

"The shadow-Jerusalem then lost what substance it had,"<sup>20</sup> as do all pre-enactments of the fullness of time. For on Christ, an event in our time, all our history hinges.

If I may count upon your will to understand, I would even venture to say that it is unintelligible to refer to the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead as a historical fact. Thomas Arnold, Oxford history professor and Rugby headmaster, called the resurrection "the best-attested fact in history," but with that so-called "fact" he was impotent to save Matthew Arnold from skepticism. For the power of the resurrection is not its factuality, not that it happened in the past, but that it happens in our present and saves our past from death by tying our future to the living Christ, and thus redeeming our time.

Now it would not be at all perverse if you were to ask me at this juncture, "Nevertheless, did it not happen?" For there is a "sheer happenedness" in the Christian revelation, and the Easter event is surely the high point. But, you see, we would still have before us the problem of knowing what one means by a "happening."<sup>21</sup> And if you were to insist that we locate the resurrection of Christ somewhere in the chronological series which characterizes man's time, I would not deny that it can be done; I would simply deny that it can be done profitably. For the announcement of the resurrection of Christ is not meant to add to our knowledge of human history but to take the hinges off that very knowledge and give our life a history in him.

#### IV

Possibly you think it unsporting of me to make debatable assertions when the circumstances of this presentation preclude a rejoinder. Allow me, therefore, to anticipate the kinds of questions most likely to be asked.

*Wherein lies the uniqueness of Christianity in such a view of history?* Customarily we say that Christianity is different from all faiths and philosophies in at least this one respect: its truth is bound up with historical fact. That is true. There is one decided place where eternity has become time and that is the place named Jesus Christ. As Luther has said, the revelation was bound once-for-all to "a certain time, place, source, race,

<sup>20</sup> Quoted in Jean Daniélou, *Origen*, Tr. by Walter Mitchell, Sheed and Ward, 1955, p. 154.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. the altercation between Barth and Bultmann on the resurrection. Barth says the resurrection is not history, and so does Bultmann. But when Bultmann says it, Barth insists that the resurrection "happened" in a truer sense than any other happening; *vide Die kirchliche Dogmatik* I, 2, p. 127; and III, 2, p. 531. On that point Bultmann asks Barth what he means by "happened," *vide Kerygma and Myth*, London, S.P.C.K., 1953, p. 38 ff., and "Das Problem der Hermeneutik" in *Glauben und Verstehen*, Vol. II, 1952, p. 234.

city, and person.”<sup>22</sup> Kierkegaard was utterly right, therefore, to use Lessing’s notion of the chance facts of history as a more adequate vehicle of Christian expression than Hegel’s eternal truths of reason. And Pascal was right to class Christianity with such chance facts of history as Cleopatra’s nose, which, had it been longer, could have altered the whole course of history. Had there been no Christ in Bethlehem or on Calvary, the whole course of history would have been different. But it would be disastrous to the Christian understanding for one to pin the uniqueness of Christianity to its sheer factuality, its occurrence in the time of the world. For the uniqueness of the Christian faith is attached to the initiatory action of God and not to the secondary effect in time. The uniqueness of Christianity is resident not in the fact that someone called Christ once happened, but that this event is the special order of event which does not cease to happen.

*Can one experience the “sheer happenedness” of faith without a prior knowledge of some historical facts?* One cannot. This is why Israel and the Church alike date the events which evoke faith and why they recite these events as the occasions for evoking faith. Again, as Luther has said, “Before faith can be expected, it is necessary that a knowledge of history occur.” “This bare recital of history is the primary task of the evangelist.”<sup>23</sup> Nothing in Christianity, then, could condone a historical ignorance which would confuse the renaissance historian Campanella with a Brooklyn Dodger. And Dead Sea scrolls can help Christ live for us. It is important to the Bible that Isaiah saw the Lord in the year Uzziah died, and that it was under Pontius Pilate Jesus died. The significance of dated time is canonical.

The value of this method of dating events, however, does not inhere in the date. As Henri de Lubac says, “The reality of history is the necessary guarantee of the mysterious reality which it signifies. . . . Neither by banal meditation nor by impersonal science does the gospel entirely free its secret.”<sup>24</sup> Truth does not inhere in the date in world history; the date simply conserves the witness to the truth. Or as Jean Daniélou says it, “History becomes then the visible and progressive communication of a unique and invisible reality; it is one and the same mystery which is prefigured in the type of ancient law, realized in the historical Christ, subsisting sacramentally in the church and mystically in the soul of the individual.”<sup>25</sup> That is to say, the dated past is important. But there is no knowledge of the word of God simply from dated time. Flesh and blood

<sup>25</sup> *Culture et Mystère*, Paris, Editions universitaires, 1948, p. 35.

<sup>22</sup> Weimar Ausgabe 20; 219, 20-27.

<sup>23</sup> Weimar Ausgabe 32; 122, 12-15; and 27; 28, 6-8.

<sup>24</sup> *Histoire et Esprit*, Paris, Aubier, 1950, p. 207.

did not reveal the messianic meaning of Jesus to Peter, and dated facts will not reveal the living Christ to the contemporary church. God must be allowed to repeat his death and resurrection in the contemporary disciples. One cannot write church history, therefore, with the same sense of the self-explanatory character of events with which Thucydides wrote his *Peloponnesian Wars*. The history of the Christian church is, paradoxically, the history of the presence of something past.<sup>26</sup> It is useless, said Luther, simply to preach a history or chronicle. For faith is awakened only when it is told us why Christ has come and what he has given to you and me.<sup>27</sup>

*How, without the use of historical facts, do you gauge the truth or falsehood of the Christian faith?* You do not. One does not ask of the Christian faith, "Is it true?" as if there were some criterion outside the faith by which to determine the answer. One asks, "Is it meaningful?" The moment one does this, the concept of history as something past dwindles. "For the first time the past loses its unique precedence in history," as Martin Heidegger has said.<sup>28</sup> Past events survive only as one's future, galvanizing him into decision in the present. "Man's world seen from his own standpoint is a different course of history than history seen as a process within the stable world."<sup>29</sup> One hears the story of Jesus Christ and the early church as out of the past, and either it suddenly becomes the story of one's own life or it remains in the dead past. The historical consciousness of common sense asks the question, "How did it come about?" But as Karl Löwith has said, the modern historical consciousness has learned from the Bible to ask, "How shall we go about it?" The remembrance of things past in Christianity does more than develop calloused hands on archeologists; it pierces the hands of man with the stigmata of the Christ.

If Christ is born a thousand times in Bethlehem  
But not in you, you still remain eternally lost. (Angelus Silesius)

"History is not made with scientific scruples." How can it be thought to be appropriated with scientific scruples? As Albert Camus goes on to say, "Historic reason is an irrational and romantic form of reason, which sometimes recalls the false logic of the insane and the mystic affirmation of the word, of former times."<sup>30</sup> As soon, for instance, as the man, Roger

<sup>26</sup> Ebeling, Gerhard, *Kirchengeschichte als Geschichte der Auslegung der Heiligen Schrift*, Tübingen, J. C. B. Mohr, 1947, p. 26.

<sup>27</sup> Weimar Ausgabe 7; 29, 7-17. 9; 554, 16-19. I am indebted for the Luther references to Gerhard Ebeling's *Evangelische Evangelienauslegung, eine Untersuchung zu Luthers Hermeneutik*. Munich Evangelischer, 1942.

<sup>28</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, Tübingen, Neomarius, sechste unveränderte Auflage, 1949, p. 391f.

<sup>30</sup> Camus, Albert, *op. cit.*, p. 191.

<sup>29</sup> Krüger, G., *op. cit.*, p. 14.

Bacon, gets the better of Bacon the scientist, Bacon refuses to stand back from the flame to study the chemical properties of fire at a distance; he thrusts his hand in the flame to feel its elements intimately. When van Gogh wishes to depict the sun, he does not sketch its architectural roundness as a Leonardo might; he squeezes the yellow tube on the canvas and resolutely presses out the depth with his pallet knife. Some modern painters have been known even to take the thick paint into their mouths, spit it on the canvas, and spread it with their tongues.

History is as Dilthey says, "the autobiography of the human spirit." It is nothing you can hold away from the rest of your life, for history is the person living. Nothing happens in the biblical faith that is not meant to happen for man. There is no knowledge of God which is not at the same time knowledge of oneself. Hence the biblical man does not live in time as a sailor in a boat. He does not even dredge up islands of meaning out of the inundated past. Man is himself a historical being. He lives in time as a fish in water. He is in time, but time is in him. And, to quote Baudelaire,

"Time eats up all things alive."

"Time blots me out as flakes on freezing waters fall."

"Time is the gambler that need not cheat to win."

"Avid for life and driven wild by tedium"<sup>31</sup> man lives in time like a fish in water, moment by moment straining out his means of livelihood from that "sea of lost illusions,"<sup>32</sup> until he comes upon the Christ who in time is the Lord of time. And in his dying he begins to live again.

He eavesdrops on the story of Adam and does not ask, "Did it really happen?" He rather whirls in his tracks and says through smoldering eyes, "You called my name." He hears the story of Jesus Christ and falling to his knees he cries, "He saved my life." This is the mood of the Christian apprehension of truth. The Christian does not find a fact in time which hinges together past with future. He is found hinged pathetically to a past that pulls him down, and he is turned about in an inexplicable *metanoia* which hinges him anew to a source of hope. This history is by faith, hope, and obedience, and these are "new every morning" (Lam. 3:23).

It is not given to a Christian to say whether his faith is true or false, but to believe in his heart that God raised Jesus from the dead, and to confess with his mouth that Jesus is Lord (Rom. 10:9). When one has met this Christ across the arithmetical expanse of time and felt his life hinged to

<sup>31</sup> Baudelaire, Charles, *Flowers of Evil*, tr. by George Dillon and Edna St. Vincent Millay, Harper & Brothers, 1936, pp. 207, 251, 255, 37-8.

<sup>32</sup> As Krüger calls history, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

the author of life, you can know that one has come upon "time's other dimension of depth and inwardness,"<sup>33</sup> where history sets in. As our Lord has said, "He who hears my word and believes him who sent me, *has eternal life*; he does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life" (John 5:24, R.S.V.).

*Does not this view discount the incarnation, which says that God entered human time in Christ?* On the contrary, is it not a superficial view of Christ which sees his human lot as lightly skating across the spectacle of this world's time? For the time which Christ entered is not the time that we project upon the orderly spaces of calendar and clock; the time of our life which Christ enters is the time of deadline, and that time killed him as it is now killing us. It is the time of decision, a dimension deep below that thin film of statistically ordered time which glosses over the abyss beneath each moment. It is the time we *are* before we count the time we *have*. That time is the time in which we either meet the Lord of time or perish.<sup>34</sup>

Chronological successive time is a cultural invention, a febrile epiphenomenon. Christ does enter that time. That is part of his humiliation, but only an accidental part. Chronological time is the last courageous cough of a life that has no ultimate time within itself. It is the smoked glass which hides the hideous truth that our end is not a long way off, not even at an actuarial distance. For our end is now, where meaning in God abuts our aimless, evanescent course, forcing the choice which sets our very destiny. The time of man is a sinking hole from which extends no stairway of escape. Into *that* time Christ has his mission. He does not simply brush across the surface of our cultivated world. He plunges deep into the *bowels* of time, the turbulence beneath our fabricated calm, there to reveal that we need not be at our end because he has become our end and there is hope in him. The time which Christ enters, then, is not ordinary time alone. It is subliminal time, where lives are running out, like rivers without edges—the time of lived profundity where ultimate attachments form and life is hinged to destinies or else unhinged to drift to doom. That is the time of history, where all our petty times resolve in wholeness. That is the time Christ enters, and by his advent sets within our reach the hope that never terminates because it terminates our hopelessness.

<sup>33</sup> Marcel, Gabriel, *The Mystery of Being*, Vol. I. Henry Regnery Co., 1950, p. 197.

<sup>34</sup> Here even John Marsh in his superb biblical study of time seems to articulate a position which is out of joint with the entire spirit of his book, when he refuses some such distinction as between "the sphere where ordinary historical events happen and that in which the divine activity takes place" on the grounds that such a distinction would "make the incarnation impossible." *Vide The Fulness of Time*, Harper & Brothers, 1952, p. 13.

# Dialectic Morality

DONALD A. LOWRIE

THE PROBLEM OF MORALITY has long occupied the minds of Russian communist writers. In recent years, particularly since the violence of antireligious propaganda has been throttled by the Khrushchev decree, there is a new spate of literature on this theme. Among the most important of these writings are a recent volume (#30) of the Great Soviet Encyclopedia, giving the official definition, and a new book published this year, *The Basis of Communist Morality*.<sup>1</sup> Soviet writers have long struggled to determine the difference between "bourgeois morality" and that of a completely other social order, the classless society. The present article comments on these contrasts as viewed from the Christian standpoint. Unless otherwise indicated, the quotations are mostly from one of the two official sources just noted.

## I

The communist ideologists have hitherto been more successful in defining what communist morality is not than what it is. Now the Encyclopedia comes forward with more definite statements than have been previously offered. There are two separate articles, one on "Morality," and the other on "Communist Morality." Here is the basic definition: "Morality: One of the forms of social consciousness. Morality represents the totality of the principles and norms of conduct concerning the relations of people one to another and to society." Thus far the definition would seem to be acceptable, but the next sentence is arresting. "From the time of the decline of the primitive social system and the division of society into classes, morality has never been the same for all classes." This is confirmed by the definition of "Communist Morality": "The principles and norms of conduct of the fighters for communism, of the builders of the communist society; one of the forms of social consciousness of men of the socialist society. Communist morality is of a class and proletarian nature." Morals

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<sup>1</sup> Shishkin, A., State Publishing House of Political Literature, 1955, 320 pp.

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are thus the product of a definite economic basis of society, natural to the material conditions of a given class.

While communist morality is "the true morality of humanity," morality in the "bourgeois" world is something unsubstantial, based upon false premises. "Bourgeois ideologists, with the aim of confirming moral norms profitable to themselves, derive morality from the commands of God (the Encyclopedia spells it with a small 'g'), from the 'absolute idea,' from abstract reason, from the 'eternal nature' of man, and consider it as independent of historical conditions. Marxism-Leninism revealed the insufficiency of this view and proved that moral principles and norms of conduct as well as the content of the concepts of good and evil are not eternal and unchangeable, but rather depend on the economic relationships of a given society. The morals prevailing in a given society are an integral part of the superstructure on the economic basis of society and are changed as the basis changes which gives them rise, are liquidated in consequence of the liquidation of that basis. . . ."

This brings us to the question of the derivation, the ultimate authority of morals. Communism says, "back of the principles and norms of communist morality stands the force of the whole people which has created these norms."<sup>2</sup> Thus the principles of morality are discovered within morality itself—they have nothing to do with an external authority, such as religion. Nevertheless the relationships between religion and morality occupy a large part of communist consideration of ethical principles. "Morality as a special form of social consciousness can not be identified with either religion or philosophy. Religion is a fantastic, distorted idea of reality, in which external forces dominate man's daily life, . . . take on forms of supernatural power. Throughout many centuries religion has occupied the role of moral instructor, . . . presenting its moral principles as eternal and immutable, established by 'God,' and demanding unconditional obedience. Does this mean that morality is born of religion? No—morality and religion are two different forms of social consciousness, arising from different economic relationships. . . . Religion does not create morality, but merely sanctifies those moral norms which arise from a corresponding economic relationship."<sup>3</sup>

Religion, we are told, "serving the interests of capitalism, inspires the masses with the idea that . . . each man's duty is defined by his position

<sup>2</sup> Shishkin, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 57f.

in society, . . . 'give up all thought of socialism, of conflict with capital, be satisfied with your status as a slave'—that is the content of Christian morality." "Christian morality once justified slavery; now it sanctifies the yoke of capital on the shoulders of the working masses." It "inspires the masses to love their exploiters, preaches slavish patience, . . . arouses man's consciousness of his inborn sinfulness . . . teaches man to despise his earthly needs and be concerned about the 'salvation of his soul.'"<sup>4</sup>

The morality of the working class, on the other hand, "resolutely casts aside the pretense of religion to the role of man's moral teacher." It "seeks its base not in heaven, but on earth, in the practical struggle . . . for a classless society."

Whether or not we accept this idea of the origin of morality, some points relative to its purpose seem acceptable to both East and West. Someone has said that morality serves to answer the eternal question, "What ought to be done?" Both communists and Christians could agree on this. But they differ considerably when it comes to the question of why this or that action is moral. "Marxism-Leninism sees the supreme criterion of communist morality in the struggle for communism."<sup>5</sup> The Encyclopedia states: "Marxist-Leninist theory, scientifically proving the inevitability of the collapse of capitalism and the victory of communism, has revealed the basic content of communist morality; 'We say: morality is that which serves for the destruction of the old exploiting society and the union of all workers around the proletariat which is constructing a new society of communists' (Lenin). . . ."<sup>6</sup> Here, as throughout its theory, communism claims that it is interested solely in material good. The perfect state of communism is to satisfy all man's material needs; as a matter of fact these are the only needs he has.

In further contrast to religious morality, we are told that communist morality is not absolute, but relative. "It is alien to dogmatism. . . . It does not proclaim any moral norm . . . as equally applicable to all conditions."<sup>7</sup> "Marxist ethics does not prescribe norms, but derives them from the social life of man."<sup>8</sup> Truth and honor are all right in their place, but while "communist morality condemns falsehood and dishonor in human relationships, this does not mean that a communist for the sake of abstract

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 224.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 59.

<sup>6</sup> *The Great Soviet Encyclopedia*, #30, p. 95f.

<sup>7</sup> Shishkin, *op. cit.*, p. 99.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

honesty would betray his organization or his comrade-in-arms to the enemy.”<sup>9</sup>

## II

This strikes a note emphasizing another difference between Marxist and Christian ethics, as seen from the communist viewpoint. Christian morality is usually conceived as first of all concerning the individual: communism not only derives its moral standards from society, but reverses the order: personal morals derive from those of the collective. “Moral conduct in social life predicates corresponding conduct in personal life. And truly moral conduct . . . in both social and personal life, is conduct whose chief motive is the desire to serve . . . the task of communism.”<sup>10</sup> There is no such thing as individual morality, independent of society: “All man’s moral obligations, all his norms of conduct, express his attitude toward society . . . beside this there is no such thing as morality. . . . High moral development of the personality is attained in the collective, in struggle for the interests of the people<sup>11</sup> . . . for genuine personal happiness is unthinkable without the happiness of the people.”<sup>12</sup> “Collectivism is one of the most important principles of communist morality.”<sup>13</sup>

In part, this corresponds to the generally accepted Christian concept of participation or communion. The individual’s life is enriched and even improved by his relationship with the lives of others, particularly where this relationship is sensed as relationship to the higher reality represented in his religious conviction. The moral value of acting in companionship with others is thus recognized by both communism and Christianity, but whereas Christianity sees this companionship as part of God’s whole plan, the communist sees in these human relations, alone, the end and aim of existence.

This may be illustrated by noting the communist and the Christian conception of some basic ideas such as love, honor, happiness. “Communism . . . , as Marx indicated, coincides with humanism.” “Soviet humanism denies the abstract preaching of ‘universal love’ . . . which in a class society is always either a delusion or else deliberate hypocrisy.”<sup>14</sup> “An inseparable part of socialist humanism is hatred of the enemies of the Soviet people, of the socialist Fatherland, of human progress. . . . The bourgeois idealists accuse communism of preaching class hatred instead of

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 100.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 154.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 248.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 98.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 98.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 227.

peace among the classes. But what could be more noble than hatred of the exploiters? . . . In the feeling of holy hatred of the bourgeois, the true worth of man is expressed. . . . Can one argue against the noble hatred in the hearts of progressive people for whatever obstructs the way of progress?"<sup>15</sup>

One of the problems of trying to understand our communist neighbors is that of vocabulary. The meaning of a given word depends on which side of the Iron Curtain it is spoken. Our word "scientific" in Marxist parlance means "materialistic." Western democracy, praise be, is something quite other than "Soviet democracy." The same principle applies to a concept like altruism. We read how bourgeois moralists often contrast individualism and egoism with the idea of altruism. "But their altruism . . . does not go beyond the demand for sympathy and aid for one's neighbor, and does not at all include service in the liberation of the masses, in the cause of social progress. This altruism is inevitably transformed into hypocrisy, since the preaching of 'love to your neighbor,' taken apart from its historical and class conditions, demands love for the oppressors . . . hence communist ethics refuses both bourgeois egoism and bourgeois altruism."<sup>16</sup>

Justice is another word with one meaning in the West and another under communism. Marxism rejects the idea of "eternal justice," so characteristic of the old moral doctrines. "Marxism has given us a concept of justice, corresponding to the matured needs of the development of society." Lenin puts it even more succinctly: "For us, justice is subject to the interests of the overthrow of capitalism."<sup>17</sup>

Most of the fundamental differences between "bourgeois" and communist morality arise from the fact that "the scientific bases of communist morality, derived from the material tasks of struggle for a communist society, . . . represent an organized ethical system, free from the internal contradictions of bourgeois ethical systems."<sup>18</sup> "Irrationalism, subjectivism, relativism, are characteristic traits of the philosophical and ethical theories of the contemporary bourgeois, which they try to set over against Marxist ethics, which represent the objective needs of the development of society."<sup>19</sup> Present-day bourgeois society, with its declining ideals and morals, is merely "the expression of the fact that it is behind the times: it is not adapted to the economic bases of the development of society. Bourgeois morality has no future: it will be destroyed in the collapse of the corrupt bourgeois order."<sup>20</sup>

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 116.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 155.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 77.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 102.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 109.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 113.

All the above derives from the absolute, truly religious conviction that Marx and Lenin had the final revelation of truth. Lenin wrote: "The only conclusion to be drawn from the view, shared by all Marxists, that Marxist theory is objective truth, is the following: moving along the way of Marxist theory, we will approach nearer and nearer to objective truth (while never exhausting it); moving along any other road we can arrive only at confusion and falsehood."<sup>21</sup> "The communist party is leading the popular masses to a beautiful future: it is the complete incarnation of the reason, the honor and the conscience of our time."<sup>22</sup> In scornful denunciation of all "bourgeois" philosophers, only one name is set over against them—the all-sufficient Lenin. This is explained by the difference in derivation of the different systems. For the Marxists the supreme good is communism, and all moral values are oriented toward attaining that blessed consummation of all human effort. In the Marxist religion, communism occupies the place which in Christianity is given to the Kingdom of God.

### III

About here one begins to question the dogmatic assertion that morality is a variable, that it changes with a changing society. Anything that is good for the party today is right today, but tomorrow what is good for the party, for the "destruction of the old society," may be something quite different. Morality in the Marxist view would seem to be as variable as the wind. But whether it be in ascribing negative qualities to "bourgeois" morality, or in vaunting the purity of their own, the communist moralists are constantly employing concepts which they treat as though they were permanent, not passing. Love, honor, and the like are dealt with as though they were absolutes. Just as Marx borrowed his moral ideals from Judeo-Christianity, despite its "bourgeois" nature, so these writers on morality seem to base their thinking on concepts of conduct which lie outside the supposedly instable moral principles of a non-communist world. Their terms of reference seem to be accepted as universally valid, and morality is thus something stable and permanent. Marxist dialectic would appear to be operating here in full force. By the fact of substituting their own for non-communist moral standards, the Marxists tacitly recognize the higher and more lasting values of the latter.

Marx may have copied some of his ideas from the Gospels, but his

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 102.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 177.

moral principles are decidedly Old Testament: An eye for an eye; love your friends and hate your enemies. These are probably sufficient for men who recognize only the here and now. Communist morality is supposed to have no connection with religion, but it constantly implies, and applies, the same *lex naturae*, the inborn sense of right and wrong, that Christianity does. Only here the religion is communism. Christian doctrine has it that in realizing to the full his own nature, man both depends upon and fulfills the will of God. And Christ taught that God loves all men, our enemies included.

It may be useful, here, to note some of the parallels between communist and Christian morality. Those there are who claim that communism and Christianity are not incompatible. Both ideologies aim at happiness for all men. Both serve a superhuman idea of perfection. But in reading communist literature, one is constantly amazed at the emphasis on pure logic, abstract theory, on man as an idea rather than man as a person with interests and values which transcend the purely material. Communist morality says personality is inseparable from the community. So does a Christian thinker like Berdyaev, but Berdyaev insists that personality is a spiritual and not a sociological category. And who can say that the unquestioned material and cultural progress achieved in Soviet Russia during the last generation has not been gained at an exorbitant cost in human values?

#### IV

In this limited space one can only glance at the consequences of such a moral system, first for those who must live under it, and then for the rest of us. Visitors to the Soviet Union are always impressed by the dull gray uniformity in clothes and faces and attitudes. Conversation with every man is like hearing the same phonograph record. This is clearly the result of "subjecting one's will to the will of the collective," and this in every phase of human living. For a totalitarian government, there is no place to stop, short of the complete domination of man's whole life and thought. There is another far more serious consequence of life under communist morality, where day after day and year after year men's minds are bludgeoned with dialectics, where what yesterday was black, and so proclaimed from all the housetops, today is suddenly snow-white and just as widely proclaimed, and the citizen had better believe it, or else. . . . What result can this have, except a gradual erasure, in men's thinking, of the line dividing truth from falsehood? And when men cease to discern truth,

they become even more difficult to deal with than if they were intentional liars.

And for the Western world, several consequences emerge. The situation is concisely expressed in a new antireligious tract, published by the State Publishing House last year.<sup>23</sup> "Communist morality, expressing the interests of the workers, is radically opposed to hypocritical religious morality. At its base there is the struggle for communism, for higher attainments of human reason and effort. *Anything is moral which aids the construction of a communist society.* [Italics mine.] Proletarian morality does not teach love for all men, without distinction. It teaches hatred of the enemies of the working class, of the exploiters who are trying to interfere with the happy and joyful life of the Soviet people, trying to undermine its well-being."<sup>24</sup>

The cold war may still resolve itself into less material tension, but the spiritual argument of the free world with communism is by no means finished. On the contrary it is probable that as the material tension relaxes, the spiritual struggle will be intensified. And against a water-tight, totally logical system, almost inescapable if we deal only with the material, the here and now, Christianity must learn to affirm its faith in higher values, in men as sons of God. The battle for the control of our planet is joined—and the free world had better learn to use its spiritual weapons.

One final quotation makes clear another consequence for the Western world: "The communists, who are the avant garde of the popular masses in every capitalist country, never for a minute forget their final aim . . . the radical reconstruction of society."<sup>25</sup> Soviet diplomats may sometimes smile instead of scowling, the policy of honey may succeed that of vinegar, or the reverse—all this is but tactics. The aim never changes: world domination is the goal our Soviet neighbors live for.

Speculating on possible reasons for the recent sudden eclipse of the "sweetness-and-light" policy, the *Weltwoche* (Zurich) recently ventured the opinion that this might be a new application of the dialectic, a sudden reversal of policy as a matter of principle: it is good for the cause. As in a Finnish *sauna* (bath-house), bathers alternate between near-broiling in the steam room and rolling naked in the snow outside, so Soviet policy goes from extreme to extreme. This is not the first time we have wit-

<sup>23</sup> Prokofieff, V., *Religion—The Enemy of Science and Progress*, 64 pp.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 50.

<sup>25</sup> Shishkin, *op. cit.*, p. 167.

nessed abrupt changes in tactics, adopted because they seem best to promote the communist objective.

Thus, despite their changing masks, the men of Moscow still intend to force their moral dialectics and their out-dated social theories on the other two thirds of the world. To this supreme end, as Lenin himself has said, all means are moral. It is clear to most Western statesmen, but is it clear to the man in the street, that the Kremlin in adopting its new, what-a-fine-chap-am-I policy was merely trying a new means to achieve an objective which has never altered since Lenin returned to Russia in 1917? The average citizen should realize his stake in the struggle, and be warned against expecting positive results from any negotiations where the parties concerned start from such disparate moral bases.

# Preface to Victory

## An Analysis of John Wesley's Mission to Georgia

FREDERICK E. MASER

JOHN WESLEY approached his Mission to Georgia like an admiral assured of victory in battle by virtue of superior forces. Standing on the sloping decks of His Majesty's Ship Simmonds, his short thick legs spread apart to brace himself against the roll of the vessel, he is a picture of poised power. His long chestnut hair, falling in heavy ringlets over his shoulders, his straight aquiline nose, his firm mouth above his cleft chin, all betoken a man of inflexible will who knows neither fear, discouragement, uncertainty, nor despair. His voice rings with authority, and his journal, carefully written each day, reflects his sense of irresistible strength.

Exactly two years, three months, and two weeks later he returns home like a weary, heartsick leader who has been ingloriously defeated and who is forsaken of his men. His confidence is weakened, his poise is shattered, and his personality shaken as if by a devastating storm. In his journal he writes these pathetic words: "I went to America to convert the Indians; but, oh, who shall convert me?"

It is to these years in Georgia that we must look, however, to understand thoroughly the significance of his later conversion. These were two of the most formative years of his life. Here his soul was made ready for the great experience of Aldersgate, and here he developed those habits of living and that type of organization by which he later molded the entire Methodist movement.

One of his biographers speaks of the latter part of his life as a "noble monotony." No one could refer to the months in Georgia in a similar vein. They were months filled with significant activities and soul-searching experiences. Without a knowledge of what happened in Georgia, neither Wesley's personality nor the Methodist movement itself can be completely understood.

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Dr. Nehemiah Curnock in his illuminating edition of Wesley's Journal lists many significant gains that Wesley enjoyed in Georgia which more than offset his losses—losses, that in the end, prepared him more completely for Aldersgate.

. . . . his gains were remarkable. He learned German, Spanish, Italian, and conversational French. . . . The foundations of the expository work which in after years enabled him to instruct his Societies in daily five-o'clock morning services, and in class meetings, and which eventually made his *Notes* on the whole Bible possible, were laid in Oxford and Georgia. . . . It was in Georgia that he compiled the first hymn-book ever prepared for use in the English Church, and in South Carolina he printed and published it. . . . He learnt in Georgia the true and manifold uses of German hymns; he translated them in versions that have never been surpassed; and tested them, as he tested all his hymns, in the fellowship meetings of Savannah and Frederica, at the bedside of the sick, and in homely social circles. . . . But the crowning achievement was the slow molding of the Methodist system. The circuit, the society, the itinerant ministry, the class-meeting, the band meeting, the love-feast; leaders and lay assistants; extempore preaching and prayer; and even the building of a meeting house,—all this, and much else in the form and spirit of early Methodism, came to John Wesley in Georgia, and was transplanted by him to English and Irish cities and villages—a tree of life the leaves of which were to be for the healing of the nations.<sup>1</sup>

All these gains would have been fruitless, however, had it not been for the spiritual crisis through which he was passing and from which at Aldersgate he emerged triumphant. To understand this we must learn his real purpose in coming to the new world.

## I

To begin with, what was the backdrop for this adventure? What was the motive and incentive for his decision to sail for Georgia? What prompted him to leave the comforts of Oxford for the rugged life of an insecure colony? What was the pattern which, like a huge tapestry, formed the background for this drama? Among the complicated designs which impelled him can be seen a book, a general, and a woman.

I have in my library a fine copy of the first edition of a book written by Robert Castell in 1728 entitled *The Villas of the Ancients*. It is a sumptuous publication. The full calf binding, the heavy paper, the splendid illustrations, and the excellent printing all betoken an expensive volume. Bound with the book is a list of the subscribers; a list probably too small to pay adequately for the published edition, for Robert Castell, its author, finally ended in a debtor's prison.

<sup>1</sup> *The Journal of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M. . . .* Standard Edition, edited by Nehemiah Curnock. The Epworth Press, London, 1938, Vol. I, pp. 425, 426.

Robert Castell may never have heard of John Wesley, and in all likelihood John Wesley never heard of him. And yet he indirectly influenced the British churchman. For while he was in a debtor's prison, not John Wesley, but General Oglethorpe, a volatile, romantic soldier, who was a member of the British Parliament, came to visit him. Oglethorpe was shocked by the unhealthy, cruel and inhuman conditions he discovered in the jail. And when sometime later his gifted friend died of a fever, the General's sorrow and rage were boundless. He felt that a truly great man and brilliant artist had been needlessly slain by the murderous conditions under which he was forced to live.

Oglethorpe forcibly brought the matter to the attention of Parliament, and, as a result, was placed at the head of a committee to investigate the British jails. He and his committee were unremitting in their labors, and their shocking disclosures caused Parliament to prosecute the most notorious of the jailors. More important, however, Parliament offered a measure of immediate relief by freeing all of the debtors. Samuel Wesley, John's eldest brother, marked the joyous and significant event by writing a poem entitled, *The Prisons Open'd. A poem occasioned by the late Glorious Proceedings of the Committee appointed to enquire into the State of the Gaols of this Kingdom.* Pickering and Chattoo, famed booksellers of London, recently offered a first edition of the little poem, unbound, and in pamphlet form, for five pounds.

But with the freeing of the debtors a further question was raised. What could be done to help these men? They had failed once, as evidenced by their indebtedness, and many of them had no real means of support. Their latter condition could have become worse than their former.

But the ingenuity of General Oglethorpe was not at an end. He proposed the establishment of a colony in America south of the Carolinas to provide an opportunity for as many persons as desired to seek their fortunes in this new country. His plan was seized with alacrity by Parliament. The colony would serve a dual purpose. It would help solve the problem of the debtors, and would provide a buffer against the Spaniards who had settled Florida and who were constantly encroaching on the virgin territory below the Carolinas.

Accordingly, as Luke Tyerman records in his monumental work on Wesley:

On the ninth of June 1732, a charter was obtained from George IIInd, erecting this thin slice of America into the province of Georgia, and appointing Oglethorpe and

20 other gentlemen . . . trustees to hold the same for a period of one and twenty years, "in trust for the poor." The benevolence of England was aroused. The trustees set an example of princely liberality by their private subscriptions; the Bank of England presented a donation of 10,000 pounds; an equal amount was voted by the House of Commons; and the total sum raised, with but little effort, and almost without solicitation, was 36,000 pounds. Within five months after signing the charter, the first company of immigrants, one hundred and twenty in number, set sail, with Oglethorpe as their commander, and the Rev. Henry Herbert, a clergyman of the Church of England, as their minister.<sup>2</sup>

Other immigrants followed. A group of Moravians, persecuted on the Continent by the Catholic Church, were invited to throw in their lot with the colonists. A group of Scotch Highlanders also came to America, and soon a respectable colony was in the making.

On one of his return trips to England, Oglethorpe took with him from America several Indians who made a favorable impression both on the Court of King George and the general populace. People spoke of them as the noble redskins, and the more spiritually minded were stirred by a missionary zeal to carry the gospel to the Indians in this new land.

Oglethorpe now felt the need for a more adequate Christian ministry within the colony. Rev. Samuel Quincy (Wesley's immediate predecessor) was not too successful, and was desirous of resigning; his successor had to be chosen. At this critical juncture, Dr. John Burton of Corpus Christi College and one of the twenty-one trustees of the colony began to proclaim the challenge offered to young clergymen for sacrificial service in America. He knew of both John and Charles Wesley, and the Oxford Movement; and he felt that in John Wesley, particularly, he had found the man that was needed in Georgia. He introduced John Wesley to Oglethorpe and strongly urged him to undertake this mission both to the Indians and to the infant colony.

Oglethorpe on his part did all that he could to present the need in a challenging light. He sincerely wanted to elevate the moral tone of the colony itself; but beyond this he felt, and rightly, that if the Indians could be Christianized, they would no longer be a standing menace to the colonists, and Spain would no longer be able to use them in stirring up trouble in the new settlement.

Wesley's response was characteristic. He said he would think about it. As always in facing an important decision, he wanted time to consult with his friends, and to establish an adequate reason in his own mind for accept-

<sup>2</sup> Tyerman, the Rev. L., *The Life and Times of the Rev. John Wesley, M.A., Founder of the Methodists.* Harper & Brothers, 1872, Vol. I, p. 111.

ing the call. This approach was typical of his personality. His father, when Wesley was a boy, had once said to his mother in exasperation, "I profess, sweetheart, our Jack would not attend to the most pressing necessities of nature unless he could give a reason for it."

Wesley, therefore, began to consult his friends. There was Clayton, one of the Holy Club, and Byrom. There was John Law, who had written that powerful book, *A Serious Call to a Holy Life*, as well as his brother Samuel and others. Beyond this, he felt a keen concern for his widowed mother. He would make no final decision without her hearty agreement. This noble woman gave the answer that has since become the standard for missionary zeal and sacrifice. "Had I twenty sons I should rejoice if they were all so employed, though I should never see them more."

Here then was the final strand in the tapestry that formed part of the backdrop for John Wesley's adventure. A book written by a man whom he never knew, a General whose volatile personality carried all before it, and a woman whose deep spirituality saw in the call to Georgia the call of God.

Briefly stated, the entire group of missionaries included John and Charles Wesley, William Ingham of the Holy Club, and Charles Delamotte, youthful son of a London merchant. John and Ingham in particular were to establish a mission to the Indians; and Charles, though ordained, was to serve as Secretary to Oglethorpe, a position for which he was ill fitted both by temperament and training.

## II

It is necessary now to examine Wesley's inner feelings as he made his decision to go to Georgia. He set forth his convictions in a lengthy letter to Dr. Burton, where he candidly stated that he was going to Georgia "to save his own soul." But how? Henry Moore, who came to know Wesley in his later life as well as anyone, says in his helpful biography that Wesley at this time was greatly influenced by the "Mystic Writers." "He believed that many of the Mystics were, to use his own words, the best explainers of the Gospel of Christ, chiefly because they taught the necessity of crucifixion to the world." In their example he sought salvation. To him, salvation would be achieved by being crucified with Christ, by living a life of severe asceticism, by seeking to follow the examples of the First Century Christians and by fulfilling all the laws and customs of his Church.

What wonder, therefore, writes Henry Moore, "if, at this time, . . .

when he found all his senses ready to betray him into sin . . . and when all within him, as well as every creature with whom he conversed, tended to extort that cry, ‘O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me?’;—what wonder, I say, that he should accede to a proposal, which seemed at one stroke to cut him off both from the smiling and the frowning world, and to enable him to be ‘dead to the world’ and crucified with Christ;—blessings which he then thought could be only thus secured.”<sup>3</sup>

He resolved, therefore, to eat the meagreste fare, to dwell in huts of the poorest accommodation and, in a place where he felt sure he would meet no women of sufficient beauty to attract him, he hoped to attain a purity of thought as suits “a candidate for that state wherein they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in Heaven.”

In this way he sought salvation for himself and all those under his care. He seemed to think that the chief purpose of his ministry was to turn the colony of Georgia into a grand monastery with himself as the chief abbot. This explains his refusal to adjust himself to the conditions he faced in the new colony, his uncertainty in his love affair with Sophy Hopkey, and his almost savage attempts to make the colonists conform to his ideas of personal holiness with its emphasis upon the forms and rubrics of the Church.

It was the complete breakdown of this system, together with the inner emotional upheaval he experienced in his relation with Sophy Hopkey, that shook the citadel of his personality and made him ready to receive that salvation provided not by his own works but by the work of another—namely, Christ.

Wesley’s pathetic acceptance of his failure and the inadequacy of his faith, however, is proof positive that he was at no time pharisaical in his outlook. The charge that he had developed a proud pharisaic religion cannot be substantiated. Wesley was never insincere. His religious life was always based upon convictions earnestly believed and as earnestly followed, and any other estimate of his character is inaccurate.

### III

The breakdown of his system for salvation, however, came gradually. It began early in his Georgia experiences when it proved inadequate to solve an emotional problem that was new to him, the problem of fear.

<sup>3</sup> Moore, the Rev. H., *The Life of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M. . . . in which are included the Life of His Brother, the Rev. Charles Wesley, A.M. . . . and Memoirs of Their Family*. London, 1824, Vol. I, p. 246.

The incident of the storm at sea which caused an almost uncontrolled fear in Wesley, and the courageous behavior of the Moravians who were also on board the vessel, are too well known to need elaboration. It was Wesley's first brush with the hard fact that his carefully thought out theories of salvation were inadequate, whereas, by direct contrast, there was an experience of religion enjoyed by the Moravians which can preserve even women and children from terror.

After the storm, he took a new hold upon himself. In keeping with his religious belief, he threw himself whole-heartedly into his work, going from one to another of the passengers in an effort to stir up their religious zeal. But the work was not too helpful for his peace of mind. Fear was with him constantly. It was like the ghost of Banquo at every feast of fellowship or prayer. Reference to it occurs in his Journal throughout the voyage to America. The merest suggestion of stormy weather, the slightest indication that the vessel might founder or sink, was enough to throw his spirit into an apprehension of dread.

Nor did he triumph over fear once the vessel landed in Georgia. Fear gripped him again and again, occasioned more often by storms of the soul than by storms of the sea, but striking terror into his heart.

This was particularly true in the diabolical scandal centering in Mrs. Hawkins and Mrs. Welch. The second of these two women was the dupe of the first, who was a scheming passionate person who wished to rule the social life of the new colony. With types like these Wesley had hitherto had no contact. His knowledge of women was limited to his mother and sisters and to that superior and delightful group whom he met through his friend Robert Kirkman, one of the members of the Holy Club.

On board the Simmonds Mrs. Welch and Mrs. Hawkins had both been attracted to the youthful clergymen. They professed conversion and with many tears claimed a desire to lead a more exemplary life. John Wesley admitted them to the communion service, over the objections of his brother Charles who doubted the sincerity of the two women. John, however, was enthusiastic with their professed repentance and invited them openly to join the group.

On landing in Georgia, now, the brothers were separated. John, with Charles Delamotte went to Savannah, while Charles, accompanied by Ingham and Oglethorpe, went to Frederica; the colonists were divided according to their desires.

In Frederica Charles Wesley became entangled in a dilemma from

which he could not extricate himself and through which he temporarily incurred the anger of Oglethorpe. Little was known of the reasons for this quarrel until about the middle of the nineteenth century, partly because Charles had written about it in cipher, using Byrom's out-of-date short-hand to record the facts in his journal. To Thomas Jackson, who published Charles Wesley's Journal, the notes were unintelligible, and it was not until 1862 that they were partially deciphered by Dr. Elijah Hoole. In a lengthy footnote to his edition of John Wesley's Journal, Dr. Curnock tells the bizarre story.

The scandal, in brief, was this. Two married women of some relative position in Frederica—they are called "ladies" in Hoole's account—conspired to set Oglethorpe and the Wesleys at enmity. Their purpose was to destroy the disciplinary rule which prevented unbridled licence. The moral and religious influence of Benjamin Ingham and Charles Wesley (John was in Savannah, and had not as yet set foot in Frederica) accounted, they believed, for Oglethorpe's puritanic sternness. Mrs. Hawkins, in particular, hated Charles Wesley. On the Simmonds he had seen through her hypocrisy, and had quarrelled with his brother for so persistently believing in the genuineness of her repentance, and because, in the teeth of warning and protest, he had admitted her to Holy Communion. A clever, strong-willed woman, she made Mrs. Welch—they were mutually jealous, each being in love with Oglethorpe—her tool. Together they thought to defy all authority, and turn Frederica into a paradise of lawlessness. The plot was simple. These women confessed to Charles Wesley that they had themselves committed adultery with Oglethorpe. Charles was simple enough to believe them. He thought their tale accounted for Oglethorpe's kindness to both during the voyage. They then went to Oglethorpe and informed him that Charles Wesley was circulating this preposterous story in Frederica—that Charles was slandering him and charging them with adultery. Strange to say, Oglethorpe also was simple enough to believe their slander against Charles. The result was that Charles, who at the time was hovering between life and death, was left to live the life or die the death of a dog, until John, summoned by Ingham, appeared upon the scene, and in six days cleared his brother from blame. Had he remained longer he must have learned more, and cleared Oglethorpe also, at all events of the vilest crimes alleged against him.<sup>4</sup>

I mention this unfortunate entanglement not to recall a sensational scandal, but to reveal its effect on John Wesley. For, while not disclosing the occasion for his fear, John wrote in his Journal again and again, "I was afraid—I was afraid." On his return to Savannah after his visit to Frederica he went immediately to the Moravians where he slept for a time, and the kindly Moravians refused to awaken him for the evening service, but let him sleep. Apparently, they were impressed that he was in the throes of a spiritual crisis that was physically exhausting.

<sup>4</sup> Curnock, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 189.

When he awakened he proceeded almost immediately to his pastoral work, seeking energetically to erase his fears and his sense of failure by his systematic labors.

But the remedy was not curative. He found little peace. For whether he was facing the storms of the sea, or, as now, the storms of the soul, he was frightened and afraid. Like a mariner with a defective compass, he did not know how to guide his vessel. It is true that by his wisdom in dealing with the situation at Frederica he had probably saved his brother's life<sup>5</sup> and the colony from scandal, but this did not quiet the tumult of his soul.

In the diabolical machinations of the women he had looked into the very heart of hell, and it had terrorized him. He had faced sin, and he had no means for combating it. He had joined battle with people who had no desire for righteousness, and he had no message with which to convict them. He had wanted to lead them to a better life, but he had no motives sufficient to inspire them. He had nothing with which to meet the difficulties of his situation except the genius of his churchmanship, and it was not enough. His genius had only cleared his brother's reputation; it had not saved the souls of those about him or given him peace of mind. Little wonder that he writes, "I was afraid." Years later he would have presented Christ. He was to know no fear then, because he had Christ. His own explanation for his success as an evangelist—given long after—is in these inspiring words, "I gave them Christ." But in Georgia his answer is "I was afraid." He had no Christ to give.

It is here that we reach the heart of John Wesley's dilemma and the cause of his terror. Both as the leader of his flock and as the Ambassador of his God, he felt a profound sense of failure. He was molding his own character and seeking to fashion the personality of his parishioners according to a hard, rigid ecclesiastical pattern, but he was unable by this method either to change their lives or bring peace to his own soul. And in the dark wilderness of his failure there seemed to be no light. He could only stumble on, grasping the one hope that by continuing to strive and work he would eventually come out into warm sunshine of an experience like that which his Moravian friends daily enjoyed.

But for the moment he was utterly confused, and he followed the only method of salvation which he knew—asceticism combined with ecclesiastical

<sup>5</sup> Curnock says that "in the process his own life was more than once attempted." . . . "In Frederica the brothers discussed the matter in lonely places beyond the overhearing of informers, and in Latin; if they afterwards had to write to one another about it, they employed the veil of Greek or shorthand. Surrounded as they were by 'spies and ruffians' they were compelled to be cautious." (page 189)

rule and regulations. He, therefore, began to work harder, if that were possible, and to extract from his parishioners a more rigid loyalty to his ecclesiastical pattern.

## IV

But fear was not the only emotion that unsettled Wesley's mind. In Georgia, he met Sophy Hopkey, a woman of youthful, yielding charm who constantly dressed in cool white, Wesley's favorite color. She captivated him by her goodness and beauty and violently shook his decision to live a single life. Uncertainty engulfed him, causing him to reel and waver like a ship overwhelmed by a typhoon, threatening its complete destruction.

The story of Wesley's relation to this intelligent, inexplicably patient girl has been related many times, but, excepting in Wesley's Journal where the entire story is set forth with remarkable sincerity and candor, it is nowhere better described than in Alfred Lunn's *John Wesley*, and in the novel, *The Holy Lover*, by Marie Conway Oemler.

Wesley, on coming to Georgia, was opposed to any thought of marriage. He had resolved to live an ascetic life and to keep the single state. But Sophy Hopkey was a most unusual person. Wesley's description of her reveals a woman who was "all life—active, diligent, indefatigable"; marked by softness and tenderness, neat in her white gowns and radiantly lovely without the need of jewelry or finery to set off her beauty. These traits combined with an intelligence of a very high order separated her at once in Wesley's mind from the other women of the colony. He became her tutor as well as her pastor, giving her lessons in French and reading sermons and theological tracts to her. "My desire and design," writes Wesley, "was to live single; but how long it would continue I knew not."

Sophy had every reason to believe that Wesley loved her. Once while the two of them were traveling from Frederica to Savannah, Wesley said impulsively, "I should think myself very happy if I was to spend my life with you." But then he adds in his Journal, "This was the expression of a sudden wish, not of any formed design."

To go step by step through the long, involved, complicated courtship is not my purpose. At one time Wesley foolishly consulted the Moravians as to what to do. He spoke with Oglethorpe; with Thomas Causton, Sophy's uncle; and, together with Charles Delamotte, he cast lots in order to arrive at a decision.

Again and again he set his mind to renounce her completely, only to write in his Journal, "and there again I felt, and groaned under the weight

of, an unholy desire. My heart was with Sophy all the time. I longed to see her, were it but for a moment." It is not surprising that Sophy Hopkey, confused, hurt, and bewildered by Wesley's indecision, finally married a more aggressive though less worthy suitor.

When Wesley heard of her intention, his suffering was intense:

I came home and went into my garden. I walked up and down, seeking rest but finding none. From the beginning of my life to this hour I had not known one such as this. God let loose my inordinate affection upon me, and the poison thereof drank up my spirit. I was as stupid as if half awake, and yet in the sharpest pain I ever felt. To see her no more: that thought was as the piercings of a sword; it was not to be borne, nor shaken off. I was weary of the world, of light, of life. Yet one way remained, to seek to God—a very present help in time of trouble. And I did seek after God, but I found Him not. I forsook Him before: now He forsook me. I could not pray. Then indeed the snares of death were about me; the pains of hell overtook me. Yet I struggled for life; and though I had neither words nor thoughts, I lifted up my eyes to the Prince that is highly exalted, and supplied the place of them as I could: and about four o'clock He so far took the cup from me that I drank so deeply of it no more.<sup>6</sup>

But Wesley's suffering did not end. If possible, it became more intense. Only his naturally optimistic disposition and his energetic active life prevented him from becoming embittered or from acting even more foolishly than he did.

It was unfortunate for his state of mind that he continued to see Sophy and to act as her pastor. More unfortunate that he wrote about the events in his Journal. The record is in his finest classical style, and it must have been rewritten many times to bring it to this state of perfection. The result was he centered his thoughts in a matter which had better been forgotten. He returns again and again to this theme. He cannot let it go. He cannot get Sophy out of his heart or his mind. Eventually, for an infraction of Church rules, slight to us, but serious to him, he repelled her from the Communion Table. Her husband retaliated by having Wesley arrested for defamation of character, and then followed that long litigation, ending finally when Wesley left the Colony to return to England confused, heartsick, discouraged, and in despair.

The point I am making in recalling these events is that the emotional upheaval which Wesley experienced at this time was as important in revealing to himself the inadequacy of his faith as any other trial through which he passed in Georgia. This should not be underestimated, although I have never seen it mentioned in any biography of the British churchman.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 334f.

Writers in relating these incidents either follow the early biographers and picture Sophy as a dissembler from whose influence Wesley was fortunate to escape; or they follow Bishop McConnell, who pictures Wesley as a consummate fool and Sophy as wise in rejecting him. Few writers concern themselves with the effect on the mind and attitude of Wesley—not toward Sophy but toward his faith and his God. It was not merely that Wesley faced a conflict which he could not resolve, it was rather that after having renounced every human, natural desire (as he thought) to please God, he still found neither peace of mind nor rest of heart. He had followed his theory of salvation to its ultimate demands for complete sacrifice and surrender and he had found—nothing. He was shaken and mystified. Where, then, is spiritual health or salvation to be discovered? If by giving every thought to God and by renouncing every desire to please oneself, one still can find no rest, how then can rest be achieved?

He had yet to learn that life is what we *receive* from God and that Salvation and True Faith are his *gift*. They are free for the asking. They are Christ's rich heritage to his followers. "My peace," says Jesus, "I give unto you."

## V

But not only did fear and uncertainty constantly dog Wesley's life, discouragement likewise stalked him as he saw his mission to the Indians fail, his people turn from him, and his church crumble before his eyes.

The Hopkey affair divided the colonists, and few were with Wesley. This was not merely because Sophy was related to Mr. Causton, a man of position and influence; it was also the outgrowth of Wesley's uncompromising attitude toward sin and his almost vicious attempts to foist his ecclesiastical pattern of holiness upon his parishioners.

His first act on landing at Georgia was to stave in some rum barrels brought by traders to regale the new arrivals. Wesley was right, not only morally but legally, for the trustees had forbidden the sale of liquor in the colony. But his method of establishing prohibition did not increase his popularity with the colonists. His first sermon condemned finery in apparel and swept the church clear of any display of jewelry at the services. He steadfastly opposed any form of slavery, and in this he was rightly upheld by Oglethorpe, but it weakened his influence, since neighboring colonies permitted and abetted the slave trade. If we are to believe the report of one of his Georgia friends, his sermons were too often directed at particular people, which, if true, was unfortunate. He seldom kept

people's confidences, but freely discussed their problems with anyone whom he thought might help. In this, he was not only naïve, he was dangerous. Besides this, he had studied the canons of the Church closely and enforced the rubrics with a rigid hand, even to dipping infants at baptism notwithstanding the pleas of their parents.

His mission to the Indians was a complete fiasco. When he went forth to meet them it was in the full regalia of a Church of England clergyman; and they told him frankly that they were too busy fighting to have time to listen to his message. He made several attempts to preach to the "noble redskins," but his opinion of them had changed.

They are likewise all, except perhaps the Choctaws, gluttons, drunkards, thieves, dissemblers, liars. They are implacable, unmerciful; murderers of fathers, murderers of mothers, murderers of their own children—it being a common thing for a son to shoot his father or mother because they are old and past labour, and for a woman either to procure abortion, or to throw her child into the next river, because she will go with her husband to the war. Indeed, husbands, strictly speaking, they have none; for any man leaves his wife (so called) at pleasure, who frequently, in return, cuts the throats of all the children she has had by him. Whoredom they account no crime, and few instances appear of a young Indian woman's refusing any one. Nor have they any fixed punishment for adultery; only, if the husband take his wife with another man, he will do what he can to both, unless speedily pacified by the present of a gun or a blanket.<sup>7</sup>

All of these facts, taken together, reveal that Wesley's religious experience, while in Georgia, was unsettled, tumultuous, and unhappy; while, in direct contrast, he saw daily among the Moravians an experience of Christ and religion that was joyful, peaceful, and completely satisfying, even among unfavorable surroundings. He studied German that he might converse more easily with them. He attended their services, he translated their hymns, he moved among their families, and he became increasingly aware of the adequacy of their religious faith as compared to his hollow formalism which left his heart empty and his soul unsatisfied.

He closes his Georgia Journal with a plea and a cry that is profoundly moving and at the same time prophetic of Aldersgate.

"The faith I want is 'a sure trust and confidence in God,' that, through the merits of Christ, my sins are forgiven, and I reconciled to the favour of God. I want that faith which St. Paul recommends to all the world, especially in his Epistle to the Romans: that faith which enables every one that hath it to cry out, 'I live not; but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.' I want that faith which none can have without knowing that he hath it (though many imagine they have it, who have it

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 407.

not); for whosoever hath it, is 'freed from sin,' the whole 'body of sin is destroyed' in him: he is freed from fear, 'having peace with God through Christ, and rejoicing in hope of the glory of God.' And he is freed from doubt, 'having the love of God shed abroad in his heart, through the Holy Ghost which is given unto him'; which 'Spirit itself beareth witness with his spirit, that he is a child of God.' "<sup>8</sup>

We cannot help but feel that a man as sincere as Wesley must eventually find that for which he is seeking. And he did. In the classic extract from his Journal we read:

In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street where one was reading Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for my salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.

John Wesley no longer needed to search for God; *God* had laid hold of *him*, and in the joy of that experience John Wesley's soul was satisfied. His Mission to Georgia had proved not a failure, but a Preface to Victory.

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<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 424.

# Canon Raven on "Natural Science and Christian Theology"

NATHANIEL MICKLEM

CANON RAVEN'S GIFFORD LECTURES were delivered in 1951-2, and have since been published in two volumes or "series." Since every book is in some sense an open letter from the writer to his readers, it is well to note who it is that addresses us in these two remarkable volumes. Dr. Raven was a Canon of Liverpool Cathedral before he became a Professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge, Master of Christ's College, and, for a time, Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge. As a theologian he is learned in the Patristic period; he is also a naturalist with a wide knowledge of modern science, particularly in the field of biology. He has been a combatant soldier and (later) a pacifist. Through his life he has taken a leading part in movements to relate Christianity to the present industrial order, in efforts to revitalize church institutions, and in the task of attempting a liberal interpretation of the Christian faith. His eager, impetuous, genial, devout, free, prophetic spirit is manifest throughout these pages.

He calls for a radical reconstruction of Christian thought in the light of the discoveries of modern science. Hitherto Nature has been regarded as the stage upon which the drama of man's fall and redemption has been, and is being, played. But if we take seriously the story of Evolution, we must now recognize that in the processes of Nature we must see not the setting of the play but an integral part of the play itself, and "this must in fact enlarge our whole concept of the scope and character of religion."<sup>1</sup> The principles of the Incarnation and the Cross are, as Dr. Raven believes, the key to the entire natural order.

After a brief sketch of biblical thought about Nature, Dr. Raven turns to the early Church. To the first theologians, notably of the Alexandrian

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<sup>1</sup> *Science and Religion*, p. 20.

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school, it appeared that if "the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us," then human nature must itself be *capax deitatis*.<sup>2</sup> Hence the development of the Logos theology and a respectful, wondering, and almost scientific outlook upon Nature. But, for reasons here briefly indicated, the climate changed, the Logos Christology was abandoned, and the Church became committed to "the degradation of nature and history, to the establishment of the antithesis between secular and sacred, and to the replacement of science and factual record by fable and hagiology."<sup>3</sup> Dr. Raven comments in his second volume that when Origen was condemned and Cyril canonized, the Word of God was made of none effect.<sup>4</sup>

The six chapters that follow are in effect a brief but illuminating sketch of the development of man's thought about Nature in the West from the Middle Ages to the nineteenth century. It is not till his final chapter that Dr. Raven returns to the urgent philosophical and religious questions of today. For a long time Christian thinkers had to deal with a mechanistic idea of Nature put forward or assumed by scientists. Einstein has changed all that. He proved that weight and measurement are not categories of absolute validity;<sup>5</sup> his work pointed the way to the quantum theory; it has now become plain that there is a principle of indeterminacy inherent in Nature; the "laws of nature" though exact enough for practical purposes are not strictly and universally valid.<sup>6</sup> A principle of indeterminacy may well be deemed a principle of creativity; the old "closed universe" is no more the scientist's discovery or presupposition. Nature, in fact, is part of the play, and "the segregation of religion from science is wholly incompatible with any real belief in an Incarnation."<sup>7</sup>

The second volume carries forward the argument of the first, but covers a much wider field, for it offers a sketch and restatement of almost all the great problems of theology. It is marred for the reader by a most vexatious intercalation of little figures, often in the middle of sentences, indicating footnotes. It is well that references in the text should be defined at the foot of the page, but one gets the impression that Dr. Raven, reading his proofs, made a number of mental comments and incontinently set them down as interruptions of the text. For one who listens to a sentence as well as one who reads it, the result is most distracting.

This second series purports to be a modern *Religio Medici*. It begins with a call to a new Reformation, more liberal, more radical than the last.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48.

<sup>4</sup> *Experience and Interpretation*, p. 100.

<sup>5</sup> *Science and Religion*, p. 189.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 190-192.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 197.

We used to say that while history deals with particulars, science is concerned with abstractions and general laws. This is no longer wholly true. Birds and dogs, for instance, are individuals whom science must treat as such.<sup>8</sup> We have been accustomed to trace the course of Evolution from its first beginning till life's diapason ends in man; we have tended, therefore, to explain or interpret ends in terms of first beginnings. Dr. Raven advises us also to reverse the process, seeking to trace as far back as possible those qualities or gifts which we recognize as belonging to mature humanity,<sup>9</sup> for we are part of Nature, and all Nature must have a place in our theology.

Dr. Raven deals next with religious experience, which he defines as "fundamentally an awareness of Absolute Being, of a reality, itself infinite, of which the finitudes of space-time are in differing degrees the symbols or instruments"; this awareness he holds to be "a universal characteristic of mankind."<sup>10</sup> There are many religions, but religion fundamentally is one. This religious experience is later defined as "an awareness of an existence which is permanent, unitary and inclusive, which at once welcomes and judges us, catching us up into adoration and communion and at the same time convincing us of our solitariness and our shame."<sup>11</sup> Dr. Raven has been much influenced by Otto's exposition of "the holy."

It is this religious experience which Jesus supremely evokes in us as he illuminates, condemns, forgives; hence as modern men we can endorse such early confessions as that he is the embodiment of the divine Word, the Alpha and Omega of the creation.<sup>12</sup> Our need, says Dr. Raven, who here as ever is the zealous opponent of the "neo-orthodox," is for a Logos Christology. We must go back, as it were, to Clement of Alexandria and to Origen, and maintain that Christ "was akin to us organically because Himself the perfection of that which each of us possesses as our birthright; He consummated for us the whole story of creation and history in which He is the supreme agent."<sup>13</sup>

The great Alexandrians have been accused of Binitarianism, because they did not distinguish between the Word and the Spirit. Dr. Raven prefers a Trinitarian formulation but observes that the doctrine of the Spirit has in fact been impoverished in the later "orthodox" formulations.<sup>14</sup> The various doctrines of the Atonement are shown to correspond with man's deepest corporate needs at various epochs.<sup>15</sup> Dr. Raven implies, if he does

<sup>8</sup> *Experience and Interpretation*, p. 11.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 68.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 83.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 44.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 85.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 185.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 92.

not precisely state, that in these days we shall do well to reconsider the early Patristic teaching that Christ *in taking our flesh upon him* became thereby the Savior of all mankind. He is "the image, the representative, the embodiment" of God for us.<sup>16</sup>

There are two "unique sacraments" for mankind, the created universe and Jesus Christ, and Jesus is essentially related to the entire universe.<sup>17</sup> Hence Dr. Raven will have none of that "scorn of nature" which he finds, or thinks he finds, in C. S. Lewis, Charles Williams, T. S. Eliot, and the neo-orthodox.<sup>18</sup> He deals with the troublesome question of pain in Nature,<sup>19</sup> with the marvels of instinct and design,<sup>20</sup> and holds that creativity is expressed in the functioning and properties of the elements themselves.<sup>21</sup> The principle of the Cross runs through the natural order; there is also a principle that points to the Incarnation, for there is "a creativity or *nusus* manifested in the whole and every particular," and the creative process which culminates in Christ is to be regarded "as at every level reflecting in its own measure something of the quality of deity."<sup>22</sup> This looks somewhat like the seraphical theology of Bonaventura with Evolution added! We must speak of a divine *kenosis* in all Nature.

It may be thought that Dr. Raven's view makes no clear distinction between the Logos and the Spirit, but he himself sets forth a restatement of the doctrine of the Trinity in these terms:

There is in the whole evolutionary process a purposive urge promoting not only larger ranges of activity, fuller individuation and ultimately the emergence of personality, but a harmony in diversity, the gradual fulfilment of a plan, the integration of the several elements of the design into a complex and inclusive pattern. If this be granted, then such a pattern presupposes a model or archetype, as its "great original" and consummation, who expresses in all its fulness the character and intention of the whole. It is legitimate and . . . necessary to associate this cosmic purpose with the infinite Being whom we encounter in our moments of fullest experience and whom the mystics and saints have made known.<sup>23</sup>

Is this not a proper Trinitarian formulation?

This brief and defective synopsis of Dr. Raven's contentions will suffice to indicate the unity of plan running through the two volumes, which cover a great variety of themes. Those whose first anxious question is whether Dr. Raven's conclusions are orthodox are in no position to estimate the value of his work; for if it really be the case, as Dr. Raven supposes,

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 102.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 134-139.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 105.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 143.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 195.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 155, 157.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 116.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 146.

that the discoveries of modern science require of us a radical reconstruction of religious thinking, the question how far our new theology is congruous with traditional views is of very secondary importance.

An old prayer from the seventeenth century begins, "O God, who hast made all things for man and man for thy glory." Today it might seem presumptuous or even ridiculous to suppose that the galaxies revealed or surmised by the astrophysicists were created for the benefit of the transient inhabitants of this little planet. We may more modestly give thanks if in the midst of the mystery of the creative process of which we are a part, light has been given us upon our way and glimpses into the mind of the Eternal have been vouchsafed to us. It is a legitimate criticism of traditional orthodoxy that it is expressed in terms that are pre-Copernican; it is concerned with the redemption of man and has nothing to say of the cosmic order wherein man's life is set. Dr. Raven's lectures have the great importance of a pioneering journey over largely untracked country; if the map that he brings home is a mere sketch and even defective at that, we may yet be thankful for his insights and his courage.

The Barthians and the neo-orthodox are the constant butts of Dr. Raven's theological wrath. How far his criticisms are justified in respect of the position which the ever-moving Dr. Karl Barth may at the moment have attained, may be left an open question. But it may fairly be said that the recent movements which may be called neo-orthodox or neo-Calvinist, or even Biblical Theology, have in different degrees represented a flight from reason or at least from liberal thinking, have pointed to a restatement of theology in largely traditional terms, and have contributed little or nothing to the restatement of the faith in the light of modern scientific knowledge. They have represented a reaction from the older somewhat rationalistic liberalism, but they have powerfully restated and reclaimed for the Church the essential notes of the unchanging gospel. It is no matter if Dr. Raven's suggestions are inconsistent with the traditional orthodoxies; it would be a great matter if they were incompatible with the gospel.

Here, I think, there should be some suspense of judgment. Let there be no doubt that, in his heart and intention, Dr. Raven is as much evangelist as he is a liberal and scientific thinker. A reviewer should properly spend a few months trying to preach in terms of Dr. Raven's theology before he should attempt to judge whether it is a possible vehicle of the gospel. At a first reading, I feel hesitant upon two matters.

First, Dr. Raven constantly inveighs against the extreme transcen-

dentalism of the neo-orthodox movements where God is represented as the "wholly Other," where man is said to have no point of contact with God, and the world with mankind is viewed virtually as a "mass of perdition." Here he makes good his case. It may be thought by some that, on the other hand, Dr. Raven offers an almost exclusively immanentist theology in which no place is to be found for "the mighty acts of God" that are of the essence of the gospel.

I doubt whether this criticism would be fair. It has, indeed, usually been held by most theologians that the Incarnation is to be regarded as God's desperate remedy to redeem the disaster of the Fall, but great names in theology may be attached to the view that the Incarnation is no second thought, as it were, but was from eternity the end and purpose of creation. Dr. Raven's view approximates to this. It may not be impossible to translate the dynamic language of Scripture into Dr. Raven's immanentist terms; certainly there was gain as well as loss when "Logos" was substituted for "Messiah." It is for a Logos Christology that Dr. Raven contends throughout his lectures.

Second, in reaction, it may be, from the extreme individualism of traditional Church thought, Dr. Raven recalls us to the relation of Christ to the whole human race, and indeed to the whole cosmic order. If his thought is never impersonal, it may be questioned whether it gives a value to the individual comparable to that traditionally asserted by Christians. His treatment of the so-called eschatological passages in the Gospels is not fully satisfactory. Plainly the consummation or fulfillment of the cosmic process must lie in the future, but what manner of futurity, if any, awaits any individual element in the process, including individual men, is not very clearly to be discerned.

I feel sure Dr. Raven would declare that there is a permanent or eternal joy in heaven over every sinner that repents. He has little to say of what this means for the sinner. The apostle spoke of Christ "who loved me and gave himself for me." I, who know Dr. Raven, feel very sure that he could use those words; but I am doubtful whether his theological reconstruction is in all points adequate to the gospel of which he is evangelist.

But if, to revert to my metaphor, Dr. Raven has not brought us back an ordnance survey accurately plotting the countryside, an inch to a mile, he has provided us with a sketch plan of a great land hitherto little explored, upon which Christian thinkers of this generation are indubitably called to enter. It is more honorable to be a pioneer than a cartographer!

## Book Reviews

**Foundation of American Freedom: Calvinism in the development of democratic thought and action.** By A. MERVYN DAVIES. New York: Abingdon Press, 1955. 253 pp. \$3.50.

**Freedom's Holy Light.** By MERRIMON CUNINGGIM. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1955. 192 pp. \$2.75.

These two books grow out of more than mere academic concern. From various points of view men are today seeking a modern formula for freedom by which to withstand the mounting onslaught of universal human subjugation by governments and by anxiety. The ready phrases of the Enlightenment tradition, once so powerful in the minds of men, stand exposed as incapable of grounding the notion of freedom in any relevant way for modern man. One cannot help feeling, for example, as he reads John Stuart Mill's *Essay on Liberty*, that this is not so much a philosophical scrutiny of the essential matrix of freedom as it is a brilliant testimonial of the advantages of freedom once it is secured. Lurking throughout his argument is some vague inarticulate premise concerning the ground of freedom not unlike the assumptions of American pragmatists for whom freedom was central but whose philosophy could not provide its central ingredient. Nor is any creative illumination given by those modern Existentialists for whom freedom is simply the product of decision, for here we find the annihilation of any kind of moral self prior to that decision which would make man's decisions, and his freedom, a matter of moral self-affirmation. More deceptive still is the Marxist thesis that freedom comes by way of a rearrangement of the relations of production, a thesis which obscures the deep internal sources of motivation which environment can influence but not account for decisively.

It is into this intellectual picture that these authors wish to inject the perspective of religion, feeling as they do that historically democratic freedom owes its decisive influence to the Judeo-Christian tradition and that modern man must lift from this historical connection some clue for the present struggle for freedom. To trace in detail the special influence of Calvinism upon the development of democratic thought is the special concern of A. Mervyn Davies' *Foundation of American Freedom*. Merrimon Cuninggim in his *Freedom's Holy Light* argues the same point of the religious basis of freedom, but then devotes a substantial part of his book to the vexing question of church-state relations.

### I

*Foundation of American Freedom* is an exciting literary achievement. Written by a staff member of the *St. Louis Post Dispatch* who was trained in history in Jesus College, Oxford, it combines a rich fare of historical detail and an uncommon felicity of expression, taking the reader through potentially turgid academic wastelands with a nimbleness that is never achieved at the expense of accuracy. And quite paradoxically, the argument of his book gains impressive stature not because he compares the best in Calvin and Calvinism with the worst in the Enlightenment, but because he goes to great lengths to present the shortcomings of this Reformer as well as the many non-democratic deviations of Calvinism.

The central point of the book is that Calvin founded not only a church but also a commonwealth. Davies will not go so far as Ranke who called Calvin "the virtual founder of America," but he does wish to put his chief emphasis on the fact that Calvin

made Christianity relevant for political thought and action. Actually, Davies is driving at an even broader point here, for he wants to remind us of Calvin's sense of the unity of all of life when comprehended under the Christian faith. Calvin's rich background in humanistic learning enabled him to gather all the facets of life and thought into the life of faith, producing a temper and stance far more sophisticated than those who have not read Calvin are wont to think. And although Davies makes full allowance for Calvin's strict authoritarianism, which led Tawney to say of Geneva that it was "a city of glass, in which every household lived its life under the supervision of a spiritual police," and another scholar to write that "if John Calvin ever wrote anything in favor of religious liberty, it was a typographical error," Davies also makes the clear point that Calvin combined the Stoic conception of a higher law with the biblical doctrine of God's sovereignty and the value of each person in the sight of God to fashion the central elements in democratic thought. Moreover, though Calvin was strict, he was not a tyrant. Indeed, he considered rebellion by the people's representatives against tyrants a duty, holding that to fail to resist is a "wicked breach of faith, because they deceitfully betray the liberty of the people whereof they know themselves to be the appointed protectors by the ordinance of God," reminding us of Jefferson's axiom that "rebellion against tyrants is obedience to God."

In a powerful chapter on "Calvinism and Liberty," Davies tackles the knotty question of how a doctrine of God's sovereignty and man's servitude can lead to a creative understanding of human freedom. With great skill he traces Calvin's thought here, which is that insofar as man is subject, or subjects himself, to God he is free. This of course means that Calvin linked freedom to a moral or spiritual base. This thought is really the heart of Calvin's contribution to the life of freedom, for he was able to articulate for his day and for some decades to come the simple truth that moral self-restraint is the precondition of freedom. But this was more than just an *idea*. Calvin was able to elicit from men a vivid awareness that they stood in the presence of the living God and that their first obligation was to him. This is why subjection to God could not be consonant with total subjection to any ruler, and why Calvinism, with this awareness of God, possessed a special cutting edge which humanism could not provide. Not only was this true in the political sphere but equally in the social and economic realms. Indeed, Davies feels that Calvin's immense concern for morality in the economic sphere produced not only what Weber called the spirit of capitalism but the kind of system (the "welfare state") whose animating power derives from a deep sense of social justice.

In succeeding chapters, Davies very deftly portrays the various reformations, in England, Scotland, France, Germany, and Holland, indicating how the triumphs of Calvinism led to freedom while its repudiation was accompanied by intolerance and the absence of freedom. The outcome of these reformatory struggles include a new conception of the church, a separation of church and state, a new conception of truth and a spirit of free inquiry to pursue it, and the subordination of authority to conscience whose Lord is God. Since this historical treatment of Calvinism occupies about three fourths of the book, the reader may wonder whether the title is appropriate. Actually, the subtitle describes the content of the book more accurately, but as the last few chapters make clear, the foundation of American freedom is best accounted for when the ideas of law, government, and man and his relation to God—ideas fashioned in the decades of struggle in the several European countries—are seen as the intellectual and spiritual heritage of the fathers of this country.

This is an important book, and it goes a long way in redressing the one-sided treatments of the history of democratic freedom by putting the religious element into proper perspective.

## II

In a sense, *Freedom's Holy Light* takes up the problem of freedom where Davies' book leaves it. While Dean Cuninggim also is concerned with making the general point that freedom as understood in America is the product of religious affirmation, by far the most important aspect of his book is his systematic analysis of the problems of freedom to worship, supremacy of conscience, and the separation of church and state. Whereas Davies' book dwells chiefly on the historical developments, Cuninggim's comes to grips with the critical problems of religious freedom today. Moreover, whereas Davies sets out to show that civil liberty is based upon religious liberty, Cuninggim wrestles with the problem of how modern Americans can secure religious freedom. This leads Cuninggim into a discussion of one of the most hotly debated subjects of our day, namely, the relation of church and state, and he handles it with unusual skill and force.

Dean Cuninggim deals with this problem by setting forth the ideal solution which he thinks is suggested both by Christian ethics and American experience. His thesis is that from the point of view of Christian ethics the state has to be regarded as called into being by God, and for that reason there is a basic relation between religious faith and the state. But it also follows that the state is made for man and not man for the state, hence there is a point beyond which the state cannot go in relation to one's religious faith and life: the supremacy of conscience is a real limitation upon the state. Besides this limitation, there is the American phenomenon of the wide variety of denominations and sects. This sociological fact, according to Cuninggim, is one of the principal reasons why it was historically, and ought even now to be, necessary to prevent the organic unity of church and state, since otherwise the inevitable outcome would be the establishment of some preferred religion. The ideal solution, therefore, is what has actually been the American practice, namely, not "separation of church and state" but rather "organic disconnection between church and state with sympathetic association between religion and government."

In defending this thesis, Cuninggim analyzes several Supreme Court decisions to indicate how this high Court has confused the issue by its meandering reasoning in the released time and school bus cases. Then the book reaches its most vigorous section as Cuninggim argues that American Catholics take advantage of this technical confusion to argue for special concessions from the State. "It must be stated therefore, without malice, yet with all candor, that the Catholic desire to receive peculiar favors would be, if successful, a subversion of the American principle." But it is not the Catholics alone, continues Cuninggim, who endanger this principle, for many anti-Catholics, among them the "Protestants and Others United for the Separation of Church and State" would make the "separation of church and state" so absolute that it would obliterate the possibility of co-operation between the two; that is, they would absolutely secularize the state and all its activities. Against these Catholic and anti-Catholic extremes Cuninggim reasserts his middle-way principle. While the argument here is not conclusive, Dean Cuninggim has provided one of the very best discussions of this church-state issue, and it should be widely read for its suggestive, provocative, and truly helpful approach.

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**The Conflict of Religions.** By PHILIP H. ASHBY. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955. xiv-225 pp. \$3.50.

Professor Ashby, a member of the faculty of Princeton University, has given us here in this, his first book, a most helpful and scholarly study of four of the world's religions: Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism. These have been chosen "simply on the basis of discussing those religions which now consider themselves to be universal" (p. ix). There is a very clear presentation of the conflicts in which these religions are engaged, both within themselves and in their encounter with their present environment. This is followed by a penetrating and utterly fair and objective study of the different attitudes of these faiths toward Religious Knowledge, the Divine, Man, and Human Fulfillment. These discussions fill the greater part of the book and are valuable in showing the irreconcilable differences between the religions.

It is when the reader reaches the last fifty pages that he discovers what Professor Ashby is really aiming at. He is deeply concerned with the relations of the religions to one another and poses the question of possible reconciliation. His sanity is clearly evidenced in his presentations and criticisms of the attempted solutions of this problem in the writings of the last few decades. Our author will have nothing of what he looks upon as the more or less shallow reasoning and unscholarly conclusions of writer after writer. He is very sure that the determined stand taken by the followers of the Vedanta philosophy, represented not only in India but in the Western world by the members of the Ramakrishna Mission and by such writers as Aldous Huxley, Christopher Isherwood, and Gerald Heard, cannot stand the test of careful study. The first dogma—for it is such—which these exponents of the Vedanta desire to implant is that all religions are in essence alike, so that it really makes no difference to which religion one may adhere. Professor Ashby's entire discussion shows that such a conclusion is most superficial and inadequate.

He is also very firm in his criticism of syncretism, the attempt to formulate a religion acceptable to the adherents of all religions by using elements from them all and combining them into something new and fresh. "All such attempts have failed to recognize, however, that a religion is a unified body of belief and practice" (p. 173) and therefore cannot be torn apart. The parts cannot retain their vitality separated from the original organism. Syncretism has sometimes been taken in the sense of "adaptation" but, "It generally has been the conviction of Christian scholars and missionaries that the dangers of syncretism and adaptation are so great that it can be allowed only in the most isolated cases, if at all" (p. 175).

Again, can Christianity be looked upon as the possible fulfillment or "crown" of other religions? Our author is not willing to concede that Christianity can perform any such function. The differences between other religions and our own are so great, in kind as well as in degree, that it would seem incongruous to think of the idea of completion or fulfillment as applicable. Professor Ashby feels much the same way about the possibility of reconciliation by the method suggested by Professor William E. Hocking, who gave it the name of "Reconception." This method conceived of a co-operative study of the various religions by competent and open-minded scholars, who would seek to discover the fundamental principles on which each religion is based and to find avenues of conciliation and mutual helpfulness. Of course the difficulty here, as of the methods already mentioned, is that reconciliation is not a typical Islamic attitude, nor a Christian attitude either, not to speak of Hinduism and Buddhism, which do not have so tight a dogmatic structure but are still fundamentally distinctive.

In the face of all this, what is Professor Ashby's proposal? He is quite definite

about it, calling it "Co-operation without Compromise." To use his own words, "It is an outcome of the realization that while complete unity cannot be achieved, yet total separation is folly and self-defeating" (p. 196). What, specifically, can the religions do together? In the first place there can and should be "an exchange of thought" leading to common understanding, and no one can cavil at that. In the next place he places "common worship and spiritual fellowship," and here we hesitate. Many missionaries have had fellowship, and sometimes deep fellowship, with non-Christians; but, when it comes to praise and prayer and communion with the Divine, the diversity of the objects of devotion are so great and so fundamental that any worship in common is just about meaningless. A third suggestion is the proclamation of a common "religious ethical standard." There are possibilities here, that is, if the proposal to co-operate at all finds serious consideration. But even if leaders come together and agree on a program, can they carry the rank and file of their followers with them? Finally, all of this co-operation is to be carried on "in freedom," with no compromise of the convictions of any. What is done must proceed from "a unity of purpose and general conviction, and not from uniformity of thought and purpose" (p. 217). But how can unity be achieved on the basis of "general conviction"? The very vagueness of the concept is likely to put a damper on any enthusiasm which one might have.

Two final considerations may be in order. Professor Ashby is very fair with those who stand for Radical Displacement, or the success of one religion which ultimately must take the place of the others. He rightly declares, "In practice this theory has been the modern missionary expression of the traditional Christian opposition to all other religions" (p. 173). He is glad to testify that those who accept this position are often men who have a profound knowledge of the other religions and do not misrepresent them. Professor Ashby does not identify himself with this commonly accepted attitude, but he does not condemn it. It would seem that he still has some serious thinking to do on the fundamental question. Does he believe that Christianity will become the one religion of the world, or that all four religions will continue to exist side by side?

Finally, with all our caveats and hesitations, we cannot but be deeply in sympathy with Professor Ashby's earnest conviction that the inroads of secularism into modern life in all lands are so serious that all religions must be stirred to do more about it. He presents one way by which the menace can be met, and that is by a united front of positive action, in which our relation to the Divine, that which is above and beyond any possibility of achievement by secularism, can be asserted effectively in human affairs. It may not be *the way*, but we are grateful to Professor Ashby for setting us thinking along these lines.

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**Hardness of Heart.** By E. LAB. CHERBONNIER. Christian Faith Series. New York: Doubleday & Company, 1955. 188 pp. \$2.95.

This present volume in the exciting Christian Faith Series is designed to be a contemporary restatement of the doctrine of sin. It is divided into three parts. Part One seeks to show that man is an inherently religious being, incapable of achieving fulfillment except in relationship to some value, or good, or god which transcends him. The converse of this is that man may relate himself to the wrong god, and so

may develop a structure of life which shuts him off from his fellow men. In short, sin is a category which must be taken seriously.

Part Two sets out to demonstrate the various ways in which this category of sin has been misinterpreted, both without and within the Christian tradition. These are chiefly, moralism (which serves only to engender scrupulosity rather than a free moral response), and determinism (which also destroys the possibility of a free response by denying it). So far as Christianity is concerned, the lines in this battle were laid down in the controversy between Augustine and Pelagius. This controversy was never resolved into a stable position. Augustinianism shares the weaknesses of determinism; Pelagianism, of moralism. Both in fact are "brothers under the skin," losing sight of the neighbor in an effort at self-justification, and ending up in an intolerable self-righteousness.

Hence, declares Part Three, it has now become necessary to reconstruct a biblical doctrine of sin which will preserve the legitimate concerns of both Augustinianism and Pelagianism, without perpetuating their errors.

Part One is a lucid and persuasive statement of the case. The ludicrous picture of Bertrand Russell, asserting in one moment that all moral values are culturally derived, and the next moment finding some vantage point from which to castigate the Indians for requiring a widow to sacrifice herself on her husband's funeral pyre, is both entertaining and instructive. There is an inescapable moral dimension to life. It is good to have the argument set forth so compactly and clearly.

Part Two, in this reviewer's judgment, is somewhat less successful. The controversy between Augustine and Pelagius forms the setting in which this problem has been posed, to be sure. But the amateur is at a loss to evaluate this (or any) interpretation of their positions. The whole argument has a tendency to lose contact with the "modern man"—who so far has been carried along quite nicely.

Moreover, it must be asked how safe it is to argue from the psychological effects of a doctrine to the validity of the doctrine. The mind has an infinite capacity to do strange things with any doctrine which may come its way. Thus, the concept of biological evolution came as a liberating idea for many thinkers, giving them the belief that society can be molded closer to the heart's desire. To Herbert Spencer it meant that men must not tamper with the social process, even to ameliorate it. This would only delay the glorious end product toward which it all was moving.

Part Three, unfortunately, seems to be somewhat less well organized, and in certain sections (notably chapters 12, 13, and 14) to be prone to repetition. More serious, to this reviewer's mind, is the inadequate interpretation of sin which finally emerges. In a summary two or three sentences the author says: "A man is as the quality of the volitional attitudes which impinge upon him. A newborn infant who came into the world completely without sin would still be inevitably affected by the emotional environment in which we all live. . . . From the moment of birth he becomes a victim, not of a defective human nature, but of what man has done to man." Man, then, is the helpless victim of his own environment.

It is difficult to see how this preserves Pelagius' concern for personal responsibility. Nor is it easy to agree with the author that his concept of "joint responsibility" can be simply equated with "the biblical understanding" of responsibility. If Isaiah declares that he lives in the midst of a people of unclean lips, Ezekiel is as emphatic in insisting that the son shall not bear the iniquities of the father.

Moreover, it is difficult to see how this view escapes determinism any more than does that of Augustine. Sin on this view is not the fruit of man's freedom. It simply

happens to him. But this is to give the entire case away, making man a puppet at the very point where he most needs to have his freedom protected. If Augustine's notion of Original Sin is held to degrade the dignity of man, so does this.

A more incidental criticism must be made of the author's strange biblicism, which emerges every now and then. It is doubtless true that the Bible says the true God will vindicate himself against the false gods. But some irreverent mind is apt to ask whether this is in fact what took place when fire from heaven consumed Elijah's water-soaked pile of wood.

While not the kind of book to be read without attention, this is not a difficult book to read. The author has packed it with many rewarding insights which make it well worth the effort of attention it does demand. What have seemed inadequacies to this reviewer may not strike others as being serious at all. Perhaps it simply means that the theological reconstruction which has been taking place in our day is not yet as close to being able to produce a commonly acceptable statement as we had hoped. In any case, the book certainly succeeds in getting the discussion down to a level where the amateur in the field can at least see what is going on. This is all to the good.

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**The Grandeur and Misery of Man.** By DAVID E. ROBERTS. Introduction by Paul Tillich. New York: Oxford University Press, 1955. xi-186 pp. \$3.00.

Although David E. Roberts, Professor of the Philosophy of Religion at Union Theological Seminary, had been stricken with an agonizing illness for over a year when he died in January, 1955, at the age of forty-four, the shock persists among those who knew him. He was a man of such strength, power, and composure that it was hard to conceive of him as ill, much less to think of his passing away at the height of his powers.

In his introduction to *The Grandeur and Misery of Man*, a volume of sermons by David Roberts that have been published posthumously, Paul Tillich provides a central clue to the nature of the man: "In all his sermons, David Roberts is always the one who asks a question and points to a possible answer. But he never becomes one of those who cease to ask because they have the answer." What is true of these sermons is true of all other aspects of his life. Dave Roberts was one of those rare people who achieved personal integration and the whole man was present in all of his activities. There was a genuine humility in his counseling, preaching, and teaching because he never felt that he had the final word.

In his counseling, he was responsive, a person who really listened to those who came to seek his help; but he was responsible, a person who knew too much about the religious and psychiatric dimensions of life ever to step beyond the limitations of the counseling situation. He never assumed the posture of authority, but rather, he helped those who came to him by encouraging them to move from mere verbalization of their problems to genuine confrontation with them. As one who benefited deeply from his counseling, and who enjoyed his friendship, I can bear witness to the powerful impetus his sympathetic help provided at crucial moments in my life.

His teaching was marked by the endeavor to engage students in the quest for truth. He continually tried to direct them away from his particular solutions of the problems so that they would grapple with them on their own. He was able to do this because he was as utterly unpretentious in manner at the lectern as in all other

situations. His lectures were carefully written out, but they were delivered in a colloquial informal style that directed the attention of his listeners to the material rather than to the lecturer himself, and his capacity for listening encouraged discussion.

The two main influences which shaped his teachings were Existentialism, especially as expressed in the writings of Søren Kierkegaard, and psychotherapy.

The major work that he published during his lifetime, *Psychotherapy and a Christian View of Man*, presents a truly profound interpretation of the relation between the scientific effort at human self-understanding and the understanding of man that has been mediated by the Christian faith. In this volume, there is no effort to "modernize" Christianity in conformity to the latest scientific fad, but rather it employs the resources of psychotherapy as an enrichment of the Christian community's capacity to present the gospel to modern man.

Much of his teaching dealt with Existentialism directly, and at other times he brought the insights of this movement to the history of dogma or to a systematic treatment of the great issues of theology; but in either case he was remarkable in his ability to cut through the jungle of its jargon and bring home its fundamental insights.

The Existential influence upon his thought is manifest at many points in his sermons in the book under review, which are refreshingly free of technical terminology. For in them he insists upon openness to experience, upon a person's being willing to develop within a framework of a faith passionately affirmed. He insists upon the difference between a formed character organized around Christian faith but ever seeking new formulations, and a fixed character that uses the traditional teachings as an excuse for shutting out problems and as an excuse for adopting pat answers to the frustrations and agonies of life.

The most powerful aspect of these sermons is their passionate affirmation of faith in the face of the most realistic statement of the problems of faith. In one of the finest of them, "Hope," he declares that trust in God means that ". . . although we attach full weight to every tragedy and evil we find no combination so ruinous that the only honest thing is to abandon our trust in God." For, he says, the New Testament stands beyond our most despairing imaginings ". . . at the extreme end of the list where man confronts death. At this point, everything is taken away from us. And it is precisely in the face of death that the Christian faith has always known that to abandon hope is to abandon love." (p. 83)

It is a special tribute to these sermons by David Roberts that they bring consolation, the gospel of faith, hope, and love to those of us who mourn his loss.

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**The Strangeness of the Church.** By DANIEL JENKINS. Christian Faith Series. New York: Doubleday & Company, 1955. 188 pp. \$2.95.

This perceptive study of the structure and mission of the Church is well designed for its particular audience of two large companies. On the one hand are those on the Church's fringe who admire the Christian ideal but are repelled by the thought of entering into the demanding fellowship of particular congregations. On the other hand are those nominal Christians who disparage the church as a necessary evil, as an institution which has no ultimate significance in itself. Dr. Jenkins' eyes are cold

enough to see the shabby pretentiousness of churches which substitute worldly gentility for God's grace. He can therefore speak the language of the church's critics. But his eyes are also sharp enough to look behind the façade for that divine reality to which the Church gives its ambiguous witness. The Church which exists behind the familiar civic institution is a strange reality, far stranger than those think who look upon it with supercilious disdain. The source of this strangeness is the claim to be founded and sustained by God for the realization of quite unique purposes. Through the centuries the Church justifies this claim by "the power of inner renewal," by its secret of being born again.

After this initial accent on strangeness, Dr. Jenkins devotes five chapters to showing why the Church is essential if the Christian faith is to make sense, why the Church is intrinsic to the gospel. From its beginning in God's covenant with Abraham, the reality of the Church has been inseparable from God's saving acts. The work of prophets, priests, and Messiah would lose its meaning apart from the corporate life of Israel. Jesus saw his task as "the reconstitution of the community of Israel, the chosen and covenanted people of God" (p. 37). His Church shares in the finality of his life. "It is the community of those who live here and now, in this present sinful age, in the light of and by the power of the final consummation of all things in Christ" (p. 38). It takes its form from his: the form of a servant. By being conformed to his death, it gives its witness to the reality of the resurrection. It is destined to become "the final home of all men."

Because the Church thus shares in the powers of the living Christ, it must concern itself with its "shape in the world," i.e., with church order. The form of a servant is the key to the most appropriate order. All aspects of its organization must be controlled by the nature of the work which Christ has given to it. This makes essential the preaching of the Word and the sacraments, and the full participation by ministry and the people in genuinely corporate life. The author devotes four chapters to problems of order, which have been so divisive in Christian history. His comments are judicious and irenic.

The remainder of the book deals with the external life of the Church, its work in society. The author shows how action in economics and politics should be as central a concern to the Church as its worship. His strongest emphasis, however, falls upon the urgent demand for the unity of the Church, since the existing divisions are "the most damaging of all reproaches to the good name of the Church of Christ." Only by living as one family of God can the Church overcome "the ecumenism of evil" and embody its faith in Christ's lordship over the world.

The reviewer is in hearty agreement with the author's central emphases. There are many potential readers for whom this book would be uncommonly useful. There are our contemporary "God-fearers." Then there are the thousands of laymen whose conception of the church has been wholly pragmatic and instrumental, but who are quite able to grasp the deeper theological implications. There are the "communicants' classes," which each year need simple but profound instruction in the nature of the church. And finally there are interdenominational study groups wrestling with the stubborn cleavages within the one Church. To all these groups I recommend the careful study of Dr. Jenkins' argument. It is not an excitingly dramatic book, but its soberness makes for hard-headed relevance.

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**The New Being.** By PAUL TILLICH. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955.  
179 pp. \$2.75.

The minister of a church, of all professional men, has a wider variety of demand made on his time and abilities than perhaps any other. Yet in the midst of this maze of duties, towering always over all else, is the shadow of the pulpit which he must enter with rigorous regularity. Living and working under such a compulsion, this same minister picks up a volume of sermons. As he reads, he sees the faces that look toward him each Sunday, and asks, "What would these sermons do for them?"

The preface of this volume proclaims that Dr. Tillich has, in fact, preached these sermons. One doesn't need to be told that they were preached to a theological student body. They are not the type of sermons which will be preached in most pulpits across the land next Sunday. They are not the type of sermons which *should* be preached across the land. They *are* the type of sermons that all of us who preach next Sunday should read before we preach.

Good preaching must be theological. If the sermon sounds like a theological lecture, the people won't hear it. If the sermon is not good theology, we'd better hope they don't hear it.

This volume points to one of the places where we get into more trouble than anywhere else. We do not make it clear that the gospel of the Christian life only makes sense *after* a man has been transformed. Let the minister clearly proclaim the Christian truth about sacrifice, prayer, brotherhood, temperance, suffering, death, or any other area of human life. If he makes himself quite clear, someone will object. What the preacher and the objecting layman frequently forget is that this Christian truth is only true from the viewpoint of "a new creature in Christ." The opening of Tillich's second sermon plainly states the point of the entire volume. "If I were asked to sum up the Christian message for our time in two words, I would say with Paul: It is the message of a 'New Creation.'" (p. 15) This was already evident in the three-part arrangement of the book: I. The New Being as Love. II. The New Being as Freedom. III. The New Being as Fulfillment. Again the preacher will benefit from this book by asking: "Can I properly classify my Sunday-by-Sunday schedule of sermons under some such major divisions of the Christian message?"

The New Being reveals a quality of love based on Jesus' word, ". . . but he who is forgiven little, loves little." "Love," as the unregenerate man knows it, is of such different quality from this as to demand another name. It cannot be otherwise with him until he becomes a "new being."

Freedom coupled with this love is the other quality of the new life. It has never been so obvious as today how tragically modern men misunderstand what the unrecreated call freedom. The freedom of the Christian man is based on the authority of the truth which Christ *is*. "Jesus is not the truth because His teachings are true. But His teachings are true because they express the truth which He Himself is. He is more than His words. And He is more than any word said about Him." (p. 70)

Based on such a love and such a freedom, there is a fulfillment which is promised only to the New Being in Christ. Do we make as much of "The Fulfillment" as we have a right to? This section is the richest, but only possible because of the other two. "Since this moment (the crucifixion) the universe is no longer what it was; nature has received another meaning; history is transformed and you and I are no more, and should not be any more, what we were before." (p. 179)

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**Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality.** By PAUL TILLICH.  
Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1955. 70 pp. \$2.25.

The problem of the relationship between biblical faith (revelation) and philosophy (human reason) has been a source of unending conflict in the history of the Christian Church. Solutions have been attempted that have ranged all the way from Tertullian's claim that Athens has nothing to do with Jerusalem to the insistence of some eighteenth-century rationalists that there is nothing in the Christian faith either against or above reason (e.g. John Toland). In this excellent little book Professor Tillich directly attacks the problem with the thesis that it is neither desirable nor even possible that faith and reason can be divorced. "No theologian," he says, "should be taken seriously as a theologian, even if he is a great Christian and a great scholar, if his work shows that he does not take philosophy seriously" (pp. 7-8). "*Against Pascal I say: The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and the God of the philosophers is the same God*" (p. 85).

Tillich readily admits the apparent conflict between biblical faith and philosophy. Philosophy is "that cognitive endeavor in which the question of being is asked" (p. 5). Man is by nature a philosopher, because he unavoidably asks the ontological question; he searches for being-in-itself. On the other hand, biblical faith is characterized by the radical personalism of the I-Thou encounter in revelation. Thus, philosophy depersonalizes being while biblical faith individualizes it; the approach of the former is abstract, the encounter of the latter is concrete; the one encourages personal detachment and criticism; the other calls for personal surrender and acceptance. Does not any synthesis appear hopeless?

Tillich finds an area of agreement in that the philosopher who searches for being and the man of faith who claims to have found it are alike with respect to the unconditional character of their ultimate concern. Moreover, there is a relationship in the degree of certitude that each one possesses. On the one hand, the philosophical quest for being indicates that we have the answer in part, but do not possess it fully; we are a mixture of being and nonbeing, of certainty and doubt. On the other hand, faith of necessity must also contain an element of uncertainty. "Faith includes both an immediate awareness of something unconditional and the courage to take the risk of uncertainty upon itself. Faith says 'yes' in spite of the anxiety of 'no'" (p. 61). Faith and reason both stand on the boundary line between affirmation and negation, between being and nonbeing. "The philosopher has not and has; the believer has and has not. This is the basis on which ontology and biblical religion find each other" (p. 62). Tillich concludes that the marriage of reason and biblical faith is a necessary task as well as an infinite one. Although they are by no means identical, they are inseparable, for one presupposes the other.

Professor Tillich's book is full of rich suggestions and is the most profitable modern discussion of this age-old problem that I have yet read.

DEANE W. FERM

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**Demythologizing and History.** By FRIEDRICH GOGARTEN; translated by Neville Horton Smith. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955. 92 pp. \$2.50

In a brief monograph Gogarten has carefully drawn the lines in a controversy which is becoming manifest in America about fifteen years after its inception in

Germany. A protagonist for Bultmann's point of view, Gogarten endeavors to show how the demythologizing of the New Testament is a necessary and valid project for our day. The criticisms which are made of Bultmann will also be raised here.

His argument runs as follows: Until recent times man's understanding of the Christian faith was metaphysical in nature. Either the Church was held to be infallible simply because it is the Church, or the Bible was to be taken literally just because it is the Bible. Historical criticism broke down this way of thinking and led to a new understanding of our faith which is much closer to the New Testament than was the other. But the historical method, which gave rise to liberalism, was not able to free itself from the metaphysical outlook—it failed to be historical. That is to say, it maintained the subject-object relationship which had vitiated earlier thought, and thereby presented but one of many possible world-views. Historical relativism was unavoidable.

How to avoid this reduction of revelation to anthropocentric criteria is the problem with which modern theology has been faced, continues Gogarten. Two solutions lie open: the first is that of dialectical theology as developed by Barth and his followers. Here the danger of positing a *Weltanschauung* (a world-view among other world-views, from which man may choose on his own initiative alone) is met by declaring the Word of God to be supranatural. It breaks in upon man from beyond natural experience and language and bears its own authentic but paradoxical witness. The difficulty with such a solution, however, lies in the fact that it remains in the subject-object framework and thus cannot make meaningful its own assertion that history is the bearer of the Word of God. "To objectify God and His word is to deny Him" (p. 87).

The other solution, states Gogarten, is that of existential theology, which takes its standpoint in the New Testament and finds its modern counterpoint in the philosophy of Heidegger (here is one of the major points at which existential theology is criticized). Here we see the true understanding of history as human existence. "According to this view man would no longer be the subject which is confronted by history as an object. For indeed the knowledge which we owe to historicism is that man . . . is himself historical. Consequently he cannot in any way take himself out of history . . . Man becomes the center of reference of being . . . as such" (p. 57). This is not just another *Weltanschauung*, insists Gogarten, for here there is no possibility of man's supposing that he can be a subject observing his objective history. Man is history. Therefore it is false to speak of revelation as objective, or to refer to the "objective facts" of our faith; we must instead think in terms of the *kerygma*, which "is the proclamation or announcement of a herald" (p. 68). The task of demythologizing is necessary in order that the proclamation may be stripped of the mythical elements by which it was presented but which are not really a part of it. The *kerygma* is unique, while the world-view in which it was declared by the early church was a part of the contemporary culture. Though Gogarten is not explicit about the meaning of the term, *kerygma*, we may assume that he intends us to understand it as the unique proclamation of the Gospel which cannot in any way be reduced to human categories, experience, or culture. To demythologize the New Testament is to clear away all such categories and to lay bare the Word of God as it presents itself in history. The *kerygma* has two aspects which are inseparable: it is given, and it is received.

It is of interest to notice that this modern controversy places the dialectical

theologians in the same defensive position in which liberalism found itself a generation ago. So far as these antagonists are concerned, liberalism is not an issue. As the debate begins in America it will be worth observing whether the same is the case. Or will the discussion be a three-cornered one instead?

Whatever the outcome of this discussion, we must recognize the importance of the new philosophy of history which has stemmed from Heidegger. It is indeed difficult to read Gogarten's book because the ideas have not yet become familiar to us; and yet his suggestion that to be historical is to abandon a metaphysical outlook is compelling. If a man is a being in historical existence, can he ever escape from the medium? And is Gogarten's assertion that this existential theology is not a *Weltanschauung* a valid statement? One cannot but be drawn to this philosophy, while at the same time feeling that *Historie* (as opposed to *Geschichte*) will show him to have been prematurely optimistic. That is to say, "external" history has a way of marching on whether we notice it or not, and in so doing it tends to devalue the interpretations which theologians and philosophers are inclined to make on the basis of the inner meaning of history.

This book is not recommended for the devotional shelf in a church library. It is difficult and demands serious study. Scribner is to be congratulated for its publication in America.

WILLIAM L. BRADLEY

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**The Catholic Approach to Protestantism.** By GEORGE H. TAVARD. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1955. xv-160 pp. \$2.50.

A deep cleavage existed between Catholic and Protestant theology only fifty years ago. At that time Protestant theology was centered around the Jesus of history movement, while Catholicism was eager to eliminate the influences of liberal Protestantism by banning "modernism" from its ranks. Today, however, there is fortunately a strong dogmatic rebirth among Protestants so that a dialogue on both the human and theological level has become possible once more between the divided churches.

Father George H. Tavard's book, *The Catholic Approach to Protestantism*, makes an important contribution to this dialogue. In an unusually objective and irenic manner the little book describes the basic doctrines of the Reformation and the Protestant churches. It points out the differences in ecclesiology between the Protestant and the Catholic dogma; but the author is ever aware that, even though the churches are divided, they are one in "acknowledging Christ as our God and Savior."

Father Tavard's attitude toward unity and the ecumenical movement in both Protestantism and Catholicism are best expressed in his own words: "The step to be taken first consists not in condemning but in understanding. To acquire as though from the inside the 'feel' of a situation to which we are strangers; to undergo methodically, yet with love, conditions of life and thought to which we are normally foreign and which reach to the depths of the religious soul. . . ."

"The second step consists in eliminating our own prejudices. History is radically ambiguous. . . . We all have inherited hatreds and distrusts which hinder fair judgment."

With scrupulous fairness Father Tavard examines the ecumenical movement

in both Catholicism and Protestantism. For Protestants the chapters dealing with today's Catholic attitudes towards ecumenism and the ecumenical movements are especially rewarding, as very little is known in America about the importance of the German- and French-speaking countries for contemporary ecumenical Catholicism. Father Tavard belongs to those ecumenically minded Catholic priests who believe that "mutual respect," "mutual love" and "mutual exchange of human and spiritual values" are the *sine qua non* for a fruitful encounter and dialogue with Protestantism.

MARIA F. SULZBACH

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**Conquering the Seven Deadly Sins.** By LANCE WEBB. New York: Abingdon Press, 1955. 224 pp. \$3.00.

The condition of the "inner man" is a popular subject in these Cold War years, but the titles that make best-seller lists are, for the most part, superficial. It is cause for hope, therefore, when a pastor writes—without any apparent attempt to exploit the peace-of-mind market—concerning the deep roots of Sin in human life.

While discussion of frailties of the self as *sin* is not in vogue among the middle-class Protestants who flock to church these days, Lance Webb, now serving as pastor of North Broadway Methodist Church in Columbus, Ohio, has learned in his counseling that individuals need a clearer understanding of Sin before they can overcome their emotional problems. Drawing from the understanding of Jesus, as given in the Gospels, Webb defines Sin, with a capital "S," as "misplaced self-love seeking to save my own picture of the desirable in life . . . refusing to accept the relationship with the Father and his family . . . self-sufficiency insisting on my own way and daring to believe that I can reach my self-chosen goals in my own strength."

The author's point of view is established in his first chapter, which is introductory. He attempts to show that knowledge is insufficient for the deliverance from one's own hell. The stress is upon the significance of the "inner man." He interprets the basic sickness in human life according to the Niebuhrian view (as in *The Nature and Destiny of Man*). One often hears the criticism that this kind of theology is "pessimistic," but some of us have failed to see how it is pessimistic to know how human nature gone wrong can be changed and renewed.

Webb follows the contemporary neo-Reformation theologians in challenging the "Superman" view of Nietzsche and a host of followers and others who act as though "The Great Companion" were dead. He calls up references to Paul, Augustine, Luther, and Wesley who found the supreme reality in human life in the symbolic words, *They were filled with the Holy Spirit*.

A distinction is made between Sin, as the cause of man's impotence and destructiveness, and its symptoms in terms of the classical seven deadly sins. He devotes a chapter to each, pride, envy (and jealousy), anger (and intolerance), dejection, avarice, lust, and gluttony, the last two being treated together. A final chapter deals with man's deliverance from anxiety and worry, which the author finds more widespread in our time, perhaps, than are the classic deadly sins.

This book carries on, at a popular level, the attempt to cut through the prevailing hard shell of modern Pharisaism, "the one Sin of pride, or misplaced self-love, from which all the sins came as children of necessity." The understanding of pride which was the basis of the Protestant Reformation soon became lost to many who began to act as though Sin were a failure in orthodoxy. Self-righteous churchmen, unfortunately, still are a curse to the Church. Webb's volume ably challenges, moreover,

the prevailing modern view outside the Church—and sometimes inside—that "there is no deliverer and no deliverance except by one's own wit and strength."

This treatment of the way of deliverance from Sin, and its symptoms the sins, is a thoughtful and helpful corrective to some of the so-called "successful" approaches to which pastors are being subjected these days.

Preachers always on the alert for fresh illustrative material will find suggestive use of poetry, from Dante *Divine Comedy* to T. S. Eliot's work. Webb has a good understanding of human nature, and he has sought to use some of the insights of modern psychiatry. Passages in this book are suggestive for counseling.

The author makes the attempt in concluding each of his chapters to offer tangible suggestions concerning the "how" of "the Spirit's deliverance from sins." Generally he is helpful at this point. While he adds a few suggestions concerning the acceptance of the gift of the Spirit as he goes along, most of his points are established in the earlier chapters, particularly the one on pride. The book was obviously developed from material that had been used in preaching. But the author sticks to his central theme and has done an able job of unifying the chapters. All in all, it is a good book for both preachers and laymen.

NEWMAN S. CRYER, JR.

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**The Gift of Power.** By LEWIS J. SHERRILL. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1955. xiv-203 pp. \$3.00.

This book by Lewis Sherrill of Union Theological Seminary reflects the application of an orderly, informed, and Christian mind to one of the great problems of our time. In Sherrill's own words, "Can man become the kind of creature who can peacefully and constructively manage the power given him?" His thesis, boldly stated, is that "the Christian religion can teach men how to receive a gift of interior, spiritual power sufficient to enable them to cope with the gift of exterior, physical power which has been granted."

He probes man's profound disturbance and anxiety, the relevance of the Christian religion to this condition, and, most specifically, the adequacy and relevance of the Church's education work in this context. This means that we have here no narrowly conceived consideration of Christian education. How far behind us, happily, is the religious education which carried psychology and its understanding of man into the Church school and produced an educational program that was only a slightly moralized version of its secular source. Here we have a powerful Christian view, and Sherrill says, "The new philosophy of Christian education must come to the subject of Christian education from within the Jewish-Christian tradition and not from outside it."

Especially illuminating is his analysis of the human self, its nature, and threats to its wholeness and health. While well aware of the contributions of psychotherapy at this point, he will not restrict his concept of wholeness to the framework of nature. He finds man's real selfhood to lie in his "response" to the Selfhood which is God. Only thus, Sherrill says in his chapter on "Threats to Self," does man heal the deepest anxieties which destroy selfhood. Pure psychotherapy may deal with threats to self on certain levels, but has no creative answer, for example, to the deepest anxieties of the mystery of existence; birth, death, tragedy—the normal anxieties of human life.

Sherrill says that true selfhood is possible only within the Christian community, primarily because herein occurs revelation. The limits of the human self are trans-

cended because in the community of faith the movement of the Divine Self toward the human self is received as redemptive self-disclosure, both of God and of man. From this point on, through several chapters, Sherrill's consideration of the nature of the encounter between the Divine and human selves in terms of revelation, response, symbol, meaning, community, and changes in the self, are superb. He has a profound sense of history in his understanding of the task of Christian education as that of creating the conditions within which the divine-human encounter must continuously and creatively take place.

Making the Bible and the Christian community basic to Christian education raises myriad problems of communication, for these are both historically specific and universal, temporal and eternal, and these aspects must each be handled if revelation through Bible and Church is not to be mutilated. He works out a step by step analysis of the two-way communication: from human needs to the Bible, and from the Bible to human needs, both within the Christian fellowship. Human anxiety and the Gospel of God, of course, meet ultimately in one Man, and the triumph of God is uttered finally and for all in the supreme revelation which is the life, passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Sherrill is at his best in the analysis of symbols as the language of the community of faith. We must move beyond the psychotherapist and the physician, whose "pseudoscientific" attitude and language keeps them from dealing with the full dimensions of self. Sherrill's chapter on "Changes in the Self" seems to fall below the others in precision and power. He fails to manage the psychological and theological distinctions clearly, and shifts back and forth uneasily. Psychology, of course has more to say specifically about changes in self and personality than has theology. Theology has more to say about presuppositions than methods, and so must borrow heavily here from dynamic psychology. But in this and his last chapter on "The Dynamics of Becoming," Sherrill refuses to capitulate to the person-centered philosophy of education any more than he capitulates to any remote God-centered theological basis. His theme throughout is the relation between revelation and education, God and man. In this encounter is shaped the "becoming person."

No one who carefully reads this book can help but face basic issues in Christian education. Sherrill will force him to undergo the discipline of a relentlessly systematic consideration of the question. Certainly, with this volume, Christian education makes one more step toward becoming an integral part of the whole evangelistic and redemptive mission of the Christian Church.

HARLAND G. LEWIS

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**Challenge and Conformity.** By KENNETH SCOTT LATOURETTE. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1955. 126 pp. \$1.75.

It is the intention of this little book to estimate the degree to which Christianity is conforming to the contemporary world and the extent to which his contemporary world is being shaped by Christianity. These brief "Studies in the Interaction of Christianity and the World of Today" have been undertaken in an effort to measure the vitality of the faith. It is Professor Latourette's thesis that the continued vitality of a religion is revealed through the manifestation of two contradictory tendencies within it. These are, on the one hand, adaptation to changing situations of culture and opinion, which results in new movements, and, on the other, a faithful retention of distinguishing prime characteristics. All of this is intended to be implied in the title,

*Challenge and Conformity.* However, the book does not fulfill the promise of its title, and the techniques of measurement employed to estimate vitality are not fully convincing.

Once again Professor Latourette finds the chief criterion for measuring the response of a religion to its environment and for estimating its vitality to be the number of movements and variants within it and of those movements outside of it to which it has given rise. It is exceedingly difficult to claim a Christian origin and impetus for some of the latter. As measured by this standard, Protestantism appears more vigorous and influential than Roman Catholicism, although the vigor of Latin Christianity is acknowledged. This conclusion, however, is brought under suspicion by much contemporary evidence, such as the rapid growth of Roman Catholicism in many areas and the Chinese government's apparent greater success in domesticating the Protestant denominations than in controlling the Roman Catholic Church.

Stress is laid on the new expressions of unity in Protestantism, notably the Ecumenical Movement, but this is not balanced sufficiently by a statement of the practical effect of disunity in nullifying its testimony to the power of the gospel to reconcile the world to God through Jesus Christ. There is value, nevertheless, in the statement of faith reiterated again and again by a great historian that a "unity of love" permitting great diversity can best emerge out of Protestantism.

The book lacks a clear recognition that much of present-day Christian preaching and ministry is irrelevant to contemporary culture. If it could be shown that there were some correlation between the number of new movements and their relevance, this yardstick of measurement might be more heartily accepted.

The author brings his massive knowledge and renowned scholarship to a survey of contemporary Christianity in Europe, the United States, and some parts of Asia, with slight reference to Africa and Latin America. There is a brief introduction dealing with historical perspective and a summary in conclusion.

#### R. PIERCE BEAVER

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**Foundations of Christian Knowledge.** By GEORGIA HARKNESS. New York: Abingdon Press, 1955. ix-160 pp. \$2.75.

Written as an examination of the sources of our faith and certainty, the book entitled *Foundations of Christian Knowledge* explores the ground on which we can know what we know in the field of Christian truth. The well-known and highly regarded author attributes to the examiners of the Christian faith the right to test our tenets to discover wherein the search for Christian knowledge has common ground with the quest for all knowledge. Regarding Christian apologetics as properly concerned with "how to believe" rather than "what to believe," the author pursues the question of how we know what we think we know to be true.

Dr. Harkness clearly deals with the dangers involved in a prior concern for the content of theology rather than for the method of arriving at it. Readers will appreciate the scholarly and interesting manner with which she deals with the subjects of her chapters:

- I. Authority in Christian Belief
- II. Philosophy and Theology
- III. Theology and Scientific Method
- IV. Revelation, Faith, and Knowledge

V. The Authority of the Bible  
VI. The Inner Light of the Spirit  
VII. The Authority of the Christian Community.

In Chapter IV, she gives full value to "general revelation," "the channels by which God has made Himself known through nature," physical and human (p. 86); but the main point at issue is what "special revelation" is and in what form it can be accepted. Her preferred definition is "the impartation by a personal God to individual persons of meaning, values, purposes, and a sense of His divine Presence." (p. 88) This living encounter supplements but does not contradict general revelation. In Jesus Christ she sees "the supreme, or the only adequate, revelation of God," but not "God's only revelation" (p. 91). "Revelation does not give us, per se, a body of revealed truth. What it does give is an experience of God, mediated through the Christian community, which presents data to be examined by the canons of reason and the use of the coherence criterion. The result is theology." (p. 93)

Dr. Harkness concludes her balanced discussion of the authority of the Bible (Chapter V) by citing the agreements reached by the ecumenical Study Conference at Oxford in 1949. "It is clear that in spite of admitted differences, there is a great agreement among outstanding Christian scholars of today. To summarize . . . , the Bible is the word of God, a *Heilsgeschichte* bearing central witness to the Christian community of God's redemptive activity, and this witness can only be read aright when the best procedures of historical and textual criticism are linked with faith." (p. 116)

The devotional life (in Chapter VI) she points out is "no substitute for theology," but does open the mind to fresh insights and hidden aspects of truth (p. 129). She points to "affirmation" rather than "negation" mysticism, or "communion" versus "union" mysticism, as useful to the soul of every Christian, and to the world. Finally, the Church as a living *koinonia*, which is now nearly world-wide, is "that fellowship wherein our Lord Jesus Christ is most truly known . . ." (p. 152)

The book appears to be a summary of Dr. Harkness' best thinking on the vital aspects of Christian belief for our day. It will be well received by theologians and lay leaders alike. Departments of religion in colleges will include it as collateral reading in courses on Bible and religion.

WAIGHTS G. HENRY, JR.

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**A Basic History of Lutheranism in America.** By ABDEL ROSS WENTZ.  
Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1955. viii-430 pp. \$5.00.

Dr. Wentz is beyond question the dean of Lutheran church historians in America, and also of historians of the American Lutheran churches. The present volume, published in his fortieth year as Professor of Church History in Gettysburg Theological Seminary, is a rewriting and expansion of his earlier work, *The Lutheran Church in American History*, and it takes its place at once as the definitive study in the field.

The basic thesis of this *Basic History* is that the story of the Lutheran churches can be understood only in terms of the total social setting. Each section begins, therefore, with a chapter entitled "General Background." Abstracted from the book, these would serve admirably as a thirty-page outline of the course of American culture from the seventeenth century to the mid-twentieth.

Language is the symbol of the special Lutheran problem in this country.

Anglicans, Presbyterians, Methodists, Congregationalists, could communicate with their new neighbors as soon as they came here. The Lutherans, being faced with a language barrier between themselves and the nation as a whole, inevitably were set apart from the general society. In consequence they formed specially close associations of their own, grouping themselves chiefly by their several national origins.

The record which Professor Wentz presents is that of the gradual interpenetration of these German and Scandinavian minorities with the dominant English-speaking culture. The descendants of the earliest Lutheran settlers long ago were assimilated to the general American pattern. Later comers have followed parallel courses of their own, which still may be seen at various stages of development. With the sharp reduction of immigration in the last thirty years, the assimilative process has advanced with increasing speed.

The consequent changes in Lutheran church life are of two kinds. One is the increasingly close association among the Lutheran communions themselves. The United Lutheran Church was an organic union, achieved in 1917, of three groups which traced their origins to colonial days. In the same year three Norwegian bodies created what is now the Evangelical Lutheran Church. Three more Synods, these of German background, came together to form the American Lutheran Church in 1930. The overlapping National Lutheran Council and American Lutheran Conference seem, at least to an outsider, to be incipient stages toward a final union of the vast majority of Lutherans in a single fellowship.

At the same time there has been a growing readiness to cooperate with ecumenical Christianity. Dr. Wentz himself was a member of the Committee of Fourteen to Form the World Council of Churches, and also of the American Bible Translation Committee. Almost seventy per cent of all American Lutherans were represented in the Amsterdam Assembly of the World Council. "Americans Discover the Human Race" is the author's own caption for a chapter on the rise of social concern and social services.

The continuing separation of some of the Lutheran groups is a tricky subject for anyone to discuss. Dr. Wentz, himself a strong advocate of unity, writes with remarkable objectivity about the Missouri Synod and its smaller associates in the Synodical Conference, and believes that he sees a "present less rigid attitude toward Christian fellowship with other Lutherans and other Christians." He does betray a sense of hurt, however, at the formation of the American Lutheran Conference by five of the six bodies which constitute the National Lutheran Council, excluding the United Lutheran Church to which he himself belongs. "The distinctive mission of the American Lutheran Conference," he remarks, "is not easy to find."

As to liturgy and doctrine Wentz is sturdily conservative. He rejoices in the liturgical revival, and in the rediscovery of Christian theology as important to Christian faith. At these points Lutheranism has much to contribute to American Christianity; and it will contribute increasingly as it becomes more and more fully a participant in the whole of American religious life. How much Lutheranism can give to the rest of us will be evident to all who read this account of what the Lutherans have been, and are.

The work concludes with a chapter-by-chapter bibliography, occupying twenty-seven pages, and challenging the reader to more detailed enquiry. I have tested the index too, and found it good.

GEORGE HEDLEY

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## Book Notices

An important study was published some months ago by the Southern Methodist University Press, Dallas, Texas, entitled *The Frontier Camp Meeting: Religion's Harvest Time*, by Charles A. Johnson (\$5.00). It is the first major work on this controversial religious phenomenon of the early 1800's, and gives "a balanced picture of the growth of the camp meeting . . . and its place in the lives of the frontier people—all viewed against the backdrop of the raw backwoods communities that created and supported it." Readers of *Life's* special issue on Christianity will remember that one of the articles draws heavily upon this book.

*The Television-Radio Audience and Religion*, Harper, \$6.00, presents a comprehensive work of research (the Communications Research Project) done under the supervision of Yale Divinity School, with Dean Liston Pope as chairman. While Ronald Bridges, S. Franklin Mack, and others formed the supervising committee, the writers who correlated the findings into this book are Everett C. Parker, David W. Barry, and Dallas W. Smythe. In the mass (statistically) and individually, a five-per-cent sample of the total population of New Haven were studied, to answer such questions as: "Who make up the audiences of Peale, Sheen, Sockman, and Fuller? What are their religious, economic, and educational backgrounds? Their social adjustment? What influence do these programs have on the listeners' religious life?"

From the Philosophical Library we have three small but meaty Studies in Biblical Archeology, by André Parrot, Curator-in-chief of the French National Museums and Director of the Mari Archeological Expedition. These little books are translated by Edwin Hudson, and beautifully illustrated. They are: *Discovering Buried Worlds* (\$3.75), *The Flood and Noah's Ark* (\$2.75), *The Tower of Babel* (\$2.75); and more volumes are forthcoming.

*Virginia Methodism: A History* has been written by William Warren Sweet, and is published by Whittet & Shepperson, Richmond, Va. Unlike most local histories, it is written "in terms of trends and movements, not of plans and personalities. It is not merely a patriotic history, written to make Virginia Methodists think well of themselves; it is an objective study in which a nationally-known church historian has let the documents speak for themselves." Considerable new information has been unearthed in this field which makes the book "an enlightening footnote to American History." The book is priced at \$3.50 for Methodists, \$4.00 for the general public.

Another book has been compiled from material published over a period of several years in the monthly *Pastoral Psychology*. This is *The Minister's Consultation Clinic*, edited by Simon Doniger, published by Channel Press, Great Neck, N. Y. (\$3.95). It consists of a selection of questions submitted by ministers to the magazine, each of them answered by two or three from a board of leading psychiatrists, psychologists, social scientists, and clergymen. Subjects include: "How to set up a church counseling program," "The limits of counseling with neurotics," "Danger spots in counseling," "Frustration as a preparation for life," "Self-love," "Prevention versus treatment," "Faith healing," "The relationship of preaching to counseling," "When is grief healthy or morbid?" "The minister and attempted suicide," "Counseling with an alcoholic," "Fatal illness."

Wayne E. Oates has given us a new book, *Anxiety in Christian Experience* (Westminster, \$3.00). The book is an effort to deal systematically with the subject in the light of "three lines of insight and discipline" which "converge: . . . the

insights and disciplines of the biblical message, the findings of modern psychotherapists, and the clinical experience of pastoral counselors." Chapter headings: Economic Anxiety, Finitude (Eschatological) Anxiety, The Anxiety of Grief, The Anxiety of Sin, Legalistic Anxiety, The Anxiety Reactions of the Morally Indifferent, The Anxiety of the Cross, The Anxiety of the Cross and Holy Dread, Anxiety and the Fellowship of Concern.

Another Westminster book is *The Bible Speaks to You*, by Robert McAfee Brown (\$3.00). This is a warm, conversational, stimulating "introduction" for the lay reader, especial the young lay reader. In his preface the author says, "The Bible isn't 'just another book' with a lot of interesting information about God. It is a book in which people find God 'coming alive' . . . He's not a safe or a tame God, securely lodged behind the bars of a distant heaven; he has the most annoying manner of showing up when we least want him; of confronting us in the strangest ways. And he usually turns out to be very different from the sort of God we have invented for ourselves."

The two-volume extension of the New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, entitled *20th-Century Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, has now come to us from Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan. The able Editor-in-chief is Lefferts A. Loetscher of Princeton. The Schaff-Herzog, of course, covered the field of religion only to the early years of the present century. The two new volumes cover twentieth-century developments in religion and in all areas of theological scholarship—archeology, Biblical text and versions, exegesis, church history, theology, practical theology; the nations of the world and a multitude of denominations and sects are covered. The two volumes now are priced at \$15.00.

The September 1955 issue of *The Christian Scholar* (Quarterly of the Commission on Christian Higher Education of the National Council of Churches) is of special interest, dealing with "Language, Symbol and Gospel." The editor is J. Edward Dirks of Yale Divinity School; but subscriptions (\$3.00 a year), inquiries, etc., should be sent to Miss Dorothy E. Hampton, *The Christian Scholar*, 257 Fourth Avenue, New York City. This issue includes: "The Nature of Religious Utterances," by Geddes MacGregor; "The Religious Use of Language," by John A. Hutchison; "Religious Symbols and Our Knowledge of God," by Paul Tillich; "The Necessity of Faith," by Joseph Sittler. Two recent books in the field are reviewed by Nathan Scott and Van Harvey.

Two new Scottish Journal of Theology Occasional Papers have come to us from Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh: No. 3, *Royal Priesthood*, by T. F. Torrance (9s.) and No. 4, *The Biblical Doctrine of the Ministry*, by J. K. S. Reid (5s.). Both aim at "mutual understanding of the divided Churches, or better still, to the healing of their divisions" (Reid).

The faculty of the New Brunswick Theological Seminary, New Brunswick, N. J., has published a translation of two significant doctrinal statements adopted in 1950 and 1954 by the General Synod of the Netherlands Reformed Church, under the title, "Foundations and Perspectives of Confession." This booklet (paper) is 75¢. This Church, because of peculiar factors in its organization, had not met in General Synod since 1618; and now undertook to examine and restate its Reformed Confession in adequate terms for today. The restatement starts "with God the King, with his acts of redemption, with the Kingdom that is coming and that through Christ and by means of the Spirit has already come."

E. H. L.



